

ISAAC WATTS AND THE RHETORIC
OF DISSENT

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	ii
I MR. ISAAC WATTS' KNOWLEDGE FACTOR	1
Introduction	1
Watts: Poet, Scholar, Author, Editor	4
Watts's Writings	10
Conclusion	12
II WATTS' KNOWING VIRTUES	13
Sociological	13
Government and Religion	13
Social Life and Religion	14
Personal Life and Religion	15
Philosophical	16
Ecclesiastical	17
The Basic Differences	17
The Spirit of Charity	18
Moral	19
The Good Person	19
The Function of the Church	20
A Pastor's Personal Goals	21
Man of God	21
A Man of Virtues	22
Pastor Preacher	23
Theology	24
Conclusion	25
III HOW WATTS	26
Biblical	26
The Power of Revelation	26
The Nature of Inspiration	27
The Method of Interpretation	28
The Area of Authority	29
The Basis of Apologism	30
Experimental	31
Cultural	32
Study Religion	32
Knowing	33
To Improve the Homegoing Family	33
To Teach God's Word	34
To Improve Preaching Skills	35

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

Chapter	Page
To Prove Christianity Divine	23
To Understand the Bible	24
To Establish Preaching	24
Conclusion	27
IV. SECOND: THE PURPOSES OF THE BIBLE	29
The Nature of History	29
History Related to the Foundation	30
The Physical State of History	30
History Related to Religion	30
The Improvement of History's Powers	30
The Standard of Good History	30
Rules for Improving History	30
History and Preaching	31
History and the Reader	31
The Ultimate Purpose of Preaching	31
Conclusion	31
V. THIRD: THE STRUCTURE OF HISTORY	32
Origins: The Philosophy of Method	32
The Art of Method	32
The Nature of Method	32
The Rules of Method	32
Bible	32
Facts and Maps	32
Statistics	32
Folk	32
Society	32
Property	32
Government	32
General Historical Application of Method	32
Definition	32
Division	32
Specific Historical Application of Method	32
Type and Region	32
Polymers and Events	32
Our Future and Our Contemporaries	32
Conclusion	32

TABLE OF CONTENTS (continued)

Chapter		Page
VI	STYLE: THE SCIENCE OF VALUE	183
	Introduction	183
	The Basis of Style	184
	Types of Styles	184
	The Instructional Style	184
	Basic Style	185
	Freaking Conventions	188
	The Balance of Figures	188
	The Balance of Punctuation	189
	The Balance of Syntax	189
	The Balance of Descriptive Terms	189
	Conclusion	190
VII	DELIVERY: EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION	191
	Introduction	191
	Eighteenth Century Breaching	192
	The Young Manly	192
	The Varieties of Breaching	193
	The Art of Breaching	193
	The Road System	194
	Contemporary Evaluations of The Road System	194
	The Art of Reading	197
	The Highway System	199
	The Personal Elements	199
	The Functional Elements	199
	Conclusion	199
VIII	ELEMENTS OF PERSUASION	200
	Introduction	200
	Reasons & Believable Policy	200
	Viewed as a Mass Facility	200
	Viewed as a Logical Function	201
	Reason: Primary in Persuasion	201
	Reasons in General	201
	Breaching in Particular	201
	The Machine	202
	Viewed as a Mass Power	202
	Viewed as Dynamic Forces	202
	Viewed as Essential to Persuasion	202

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

Chapter	Page
History in General	183
Preaching in Particular	184
Factors in Persuasive Preaching	187
The Distance of Preaching	187
The Force of Personality	188
Conclusion	193
II. ISAAC WATTS' <i>SYNOPSIS METHOD</i>	198
Introduction	198
Watts's Sermon Material	198
Textual Position	198
Sermon Subjects	199
General Character	200
Specific Character	200
Organization	200
Style	201
Delivery	211
Persuasive Appeals	212
Sermon Methods	212
Single Text	212
Frequent Occasions	212
Thorough Study	217
Careful Plans	220
Material from Inspiration	221
A Typical Sermon	223
Conclusion	228
I. SUMMARY AND EVALUATION	232
Introduction	232
Summary	232
The Authority of the Bible	232
The Function of Education	232
Experience as a Source of Knowledge	232
Analysis	237
Historical Factors	240
Political Factors	243
Environmental Factors	247
Evaluation	251
Contemporary Influences	252
Overriding Influences	254
Watts's Day Values	254
REPLACEMENT	262

CHAPTER I

DR. ISAAC VALLS: TRANSLATED PAPER

Introduction

"It is not enough for the Christian minister, that he be instructed in the sciences of theology," declared George Campbell, "unless he has the skill to apply his knowledge, to answer the different purposes of the pastoral charge."¹

This problem of understanding and communicating the truths of religion has challenged preachers in all Christian history. One of the first to present a formal solution was St. Augustine (354-430). His De Doctrina Christiana, setting a pattern followed even by the ingenious Campbell, treated first how to understand the Scriptures, and second how to communicate their truths effectively.² From the sixteenth century to the present an ever-growing number of books have been printed in English treating this persistent problem.³ All of these have historical interest, some have intrinsic merit. Two none was written in a more dedicated spirit, from a broader background, by a brighter genius, or with a more practical design than the homiletical works of Dr. Isaac Valls (1674-1768).

¹George Campbell, "Lectures on Public Eloquent," Campbell and Fleming (Durban, 1872), p. 33.

²R. L. Clark, Patristic at Rome (London, 1893), pp. 124-126.

³Harry Ogden and Henry A. King, "Public Eloquent: A List of Historical and Historical Studies in English," Speech Manuscripts [Special Issue], EHL (1955), No. 4.

The mission: to compose a body of preaching that lay itself out not from the positive demand of a great religious awakening or from the challenge to hold a spiritual decision. In White's case it was the latter.

In seventeenth-century England civil persecution threatened the life and property of the so-called "dissenters"—those persons who did not conform to the Established Church. Relief came to such dissenters only when the Toleration Act of May 24, 1689, granted freedom of worship to all who affirmed allegiance to William and Mary, and rejecting basic Catholic doctrines, subscribed to the doctrinal portions of the Thirty-nine Articles.⁴ But tolerance did not develop spiritual vigor. Instead spiritual liberty increased in the following half-century. Challenging such leaders as White, therefore, was the disturbing realization that there was nothing greater here to the church than had all the former perils of outward physical danger.

In the early eighteenth century, Christianity was threatened on all sides. Rationalism dominated religious thought. Pure rational reality. Contemporary Christianity was little more than a code of morals supported by religious emotions. The idea of evangelism was out. The lower classes were spiritually destitute; the upper, licentious. Corrupt governments, epidemic drunkenness, savage laws, widespread illiteracy, social irresponsibility—these evil conditions, which characterized White's generation, challenged him to produce a method for preaching equal to

⁴William Wilson, *A History of the Christian Church* (New York, 1927), p. 476.

the needs of his age.

Today, White's homiletical writings are virtually unknown. While many recognize Louis White as a hymn writer or poet, few know that he was a mislabeled disaster preacher. Fewer still that he wrote instructions for preaching. The generality of such ignorance is, however, an excuse for the indifference. The fact should be known that White did produce, though he never intended as a separate treatise, a complete theory for effective, evangelized, pastoral preaching.

A study of White's preaching theory has three justifications. Historically, it is a sample of disaster homiletics in the age of France. Personally, it is an important aspect of the thought of a man of enduring renown. Theoretically, it is an instructive body of doctrine, still of value to the preacher today.

In his instructions concerning preaching, White discussed the sources, style, delivery, organization, and motivation of sermons. He related the reasons, the positions, and the preacher's character to the pastoral ministry. With great earnestness, he exhorted his fellow ministers to adopt his teachings. To him, preaching was an essential weapon in the struggle of the church to evangelize the world.

Alfred Henri Garvie has defined preaching as "divine truth through human personality for eternal life."² Because of the inseparable personal factor in all preaching, an evaluation of White's preaching theory calls for some knowledge of the man himself, of the forces

²Alfred Henri Garvie, *The Christian Preacher* (New York, 1911), p. 3.

which moulded his thinking, of the books he wrote, of the ideas he held, and of the way he himself actually preached. These form the living background against which he wrote his theory of effective evangelized preaching.

Wells: Pastor, Scholar, Author, Saint

In old Southampton, England, back from French Street, stood the plain but substantial house where Isaac Watts was born on July 17, 1696.⁶ The little home of his heredity dedicated people of virtue and religion. One grandfather, Thomas Watts, is "remembered with esteem among his contemporaries" for his "acquaintance with mathematics, painting, music, and poetry, etc. . . . was commander of a ship of war in 1698, and by blowing up of the ship in the Dutch war . . . was drowned in his youth."⁷ Nearly forty years later, Thomas' wife, "growing old and pining on the bed, with ghostly air, and languished soul," died on July 13, 1699, after eighty years of

Virtue that lives cannot'd be lost,
And in the breast confest.⁸

Isaac's maternal grandfather, whose ancestors fled from France because of persecution as Huguenots, was "an efficient and distinguished

⁶Thomas B. Hall, Isaac Watts: His Life and Writings (London, 1901), p. 18.

⁷Quoted from a foreword to a poem written in 1803 by Isaac Watts, The Works of the Reverend and Learned Isaac Watts, D.D., 6 vols., London, 1817, IV, 69. All further quotations from Watts, unless otherwise specified, are taken from this edition, hereafter cited as Watts, Works. Citations give title of work, original title if needed, and volume and page number.

⁸Ibid.

slaves of Burlington.¹⁰ Vette's father, for whom he was named as birth-name son, is variously reported to have been a clothier, teacher, or both. There is, however, complete agreement that for forty years he was a faithful deacon of the Free Bar Congregational Church.¹¹ In 1874 and 1875 he was imprisoned in St. Michael's Prison because of his faithfulness as a deacon.¹² Tradition points to an old stone before the jail's entrance where his young wife, waiting to visit her husband, scolded her infant son.

Little other information remains about the Vette family.¹³ We have only glimpses of Isaac's boyhood. Vette himself is the source of information revealing his early language studies: Latin began at seven; Greek at nine; French at eleven; and Hebrew at thirteen.¹⁴ To demonstrate his poetic ability all his major biographers include a poem sometime written by the seven-year-old Isaac for his mother.

- I am a little polished lump of earth
- I & I've mother's love since my birth;
- I though Jehovah's grace does daily give me,
- I am sure this mother's love will soothe me,
- O now, therefore, Lord, from Satan's clasp relieve me.

¹⁰W. F. Davis, Isaac Vette, His Life and Work (Boston, 1895), p. 1.

¹¹Ibid., p. 2.

¹²Ibid., Ibid., p. 3.

¹³Davis, Vette, p. 1.

¹⁴The manuscript written in Vette's hand was discovered in the nineteenth century. It provides dated events which he considered significant in his life. This valuable biographical material is divided into two columns. One is entitled "Teleiomena"; the other, "Memoriae Affines in My Life." The present translation with NTL. The entire contents of the manuscript are included in Meta-Peter Reed's biography of Vette. Cited hereafter as Vette, "Memoriae Affines," in Reed, Vette.

I ask no ill Thy blood, O Christ,
 I ask no grace divine impart,
 I bow myself and lay the converse of my heart,
 I and I in all things may be fit to do
 Thy service to thee, and sing thy praises too.²⁴

Wells's elementary education, save for the important influence of his home, was received in Edward VI Northampton Free-school, under headmaster Edward John Piskerton. This teacher, "held in high esteem for learning,"²⁵ was rector of All Saints, the parish in which the nine Wells children were born and reared, and frendship of brotherhood of King in the New-Parson, Wells. He was a molding influence on the life of the young poet.²⁶

When Wells had completed his course with Piskerton, a group of Northampton citizens, headed by a Dr. John Speed and attracted by Isaac's character and scholarly promise, offered to send him to Oxford. But knowing that the University required conformity, the young lad, as Gilbert Wilson, replied without hesitation that "he was determined to make his bed among the Piskertons."²⁷

It is regrettable that so little is known of the sixteen formative years during which Wells roamed through the "lofty rooms and vaulting noles and passages" of the family home on French Street, or played with his brothers and sisters in the quiet back garden.²⁸

²⁴Thomas Wilson, The Life, Times, and Correspondence of the Rev. Isaac Wells, B.D. (London, 1907), p. 58.

²⁵Thomas Wilson, The History and Antiquities of Northampton (London 17 vols., London, 1891), 1, 191.

²⁶Thomas Wilson, History of the Rev. Isaac Wells, B.D. (London, 1907), p. 58.

²⁷Ibid., Wells, p. 58.

Having cast his lot with the dissenters, Watts's only opportunity for further schooling was in a dissenting academy. By external standards these schools could only be contrasted with the Universities. They were small in student body, conducted on a domestic basis, and usually taught by one lone but dedicated teacher. They were compelled to adhere to the letter found prescriptions or accepted the call to a different church. By standards of practical effectiveness, however, as McLachlan concludes, the "work of the [dissenting] academies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was of great if not equal worth to the work of universities and to that of higher education generally in England."²⁵

The school Watts entered, called Hoxington Green Academy, had been founded by Theophilus Gale about 1688.²⁶ Three times it migrated about London: to Hoxington Green, Clapham, and Little Britain. In 1690, the year Watts enrolled, the tutor was the Reverend Thomas Rowe. He assumed the tutorship in 1698 at the age of twenty-one, serving both as tutor of the Academy and as pastor of the congregation meeting in Sticker's Hall, Hoxinghall Street. The move to Hoxington lasted four years.

Rowe's ability attracted not only Watts but, at the same period, such students as Daniel Defoe, John Brown, Jeremiah Burdett, Samuel Bay, John Wilson, Henry More, Jacobus Burdett, and John Hughes. Collectively,

²⁵ McLachlan, *English Dissentive Under the First Act* (Manchester, 1911), p. 44. This study presents not only a scholarly overview of the work of these academies but also an individual treatment of the most important ones.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 49-52. See also p. 71 for the details of the other Hoxington Green Academy founded by Theophilus Gale in 1677.

Wells was a Unitarian, but, says Wilson, he possessed "a noble and generous mind, free from the shackles of party, and widely adverse to all dogmatism in the concerns of religion."²⁰ Thus, though his nonconformity was hereditary, the freedom of inquiry he allowed his students was great.²¹ Through his own ministry and the influence of certain of his students the later became famous, Wells is regarded by Retcliffe as "one of the most potent forces in shaping the thought of eighteenth-century nonconformity."²²

Information concerning this period in Wells's development is characteristically meagre. The books he studied can be known only by inference.²³ The end result, however, as apparent in his works, is expressed by Bernard Lord Manning:

. . . Dr. Wells possessed an encyclopaedic sort of scholarship, less fine and nice, it might be, in the character than the most polished Oxford men of his time might have, but vastly wider in scope and more liberal in tendency. I do not mean that Dr. Wells knew little Greek and Latin. He was accomplished in both; but he knew other things too.²⁴

Wells believed that as a result of the rigorous schedule Wells followed at the Academy "his constitution . . . received irreparable injury."²⁵ Concerning his departure, Dr. Lord Manning, who presided

²⁰Wilson, History of Dissenting Churches, III, 150-151.

²¹Retcliffe, English Nonconformity, p. 38.

²²Wells, Wells, pp. 11-12.

²³Bernard Lord Manning, The House of Wesley and Wells (London, 1948), pp. 75-76.

²⁴Robert Southey, "The Life of Dr. Wells," in The Historical Works of James Wells and Henry Fisher Wells (Oxford, 1863), p. viii.

Walter's financial straits, declared, "I have been sorely informed that while he resided in this college of learning, his behavior was not only an inefficiency, that the tutor declared he never gave him any occasion of reproof, but so exemplary that he often proposed him as a pattern to his other pupils for imitation."²⁵ When Samuel Johnson read two papers written by Watts during the period, he said they revealed "a degree of knowledge both philosophical and theological, such as very few attain by a much longer course of study."²⁶ However, it was while a student at Dartington Green that Watts, at the age of nineteen, made his open confession of Christ and "was admitted into Mr. Bow's church."²⁷

After four years at the academy, Watts returned to Dartington and the refuge of his father's house for two and a half additional years spent "in reading, meditation, and prayer."²⁸ Johnson, who knew Watts as a friend, related the purpose of this spiritual retreat to his preparation for the ministry: reading for enlarged knowledge, meditation for deeper understanding, prayer for spiritual development.

These years at home were among the most productive of Watts's active life. Here he first embarked upon writing with serious intent. The story is told that the hymn sung in the Ebenezer (Congregational) Church, which he and his family attended, was so displeasing to Watts

²⁵Johnson, *Watts*, p. 26.

²⁶Samuel Johnson, *Life of the English Poet*, ed. George Birkbeck Hill (Oxford, 1895), III, 271.

²⁷Watts, "Memorable Affairs," in *Watts*, *Watts*, 2-3.

²⁸Johnson, *Watts*, p. 26.

that he openly complained against them. Either his father or mother
 deems, or perhaps the pastor, the Reverend Benjamin Robinson--for the
 story varies here--summed his criticism by challenging him to produce
 better. Accepting the opportunity to exercise his poetic work, young
 Watts took a traditional melody and added words of his own. The follow-
 ing Sunday the assembled Christians sang his first great hymn:

Behold the glory of the Lamb
 And let His Father's Name
 Praise ever honour Him for His Name,
 And sing before Him ever.

Let others worship at His feet,
 We stand alone around,
 With viols full of sweetest notes,
 And harps of sweetest sound.

There are the prayers of the saints,
 And these the hymns they sing;
 Jesus is kind to our complaints
 He loves to hear our praise.

Heavenly Father, who shall sing
 Unto Thy sweetest will?
 Who but the Son shall take the work,
 And open every veil?

He shall fulfil Thy great decree,
 Who Thou dost choose to call;
 And in His hand the sovereign keys
 Of heaven, and death, and hell.

Not to the Lamb that once was slain,
 No willing kneeling praise
 Salvation, glory, joy, remain
 For ever on Thy name.

Then hast redeemed our souls with blood,
 Hast set the prisoners free;
 Hast made us kings and priests to God
 And we shall reign with Thee.

The realm of nature and of grace
 Are yet beneath thy power;
 Thus shorten those delaying days,
 And bring the promised hour.²⁹

The young poet was encouraged, even solicited, to produce another hymn, and another. The series extended from *Salvatio* to *Salvatio*, until they made a volume. Their publication was, however, long delayed.

Let my biographical sketch of Watts be judged still in the telling, as inconspicuous fact concerning the man worth to be clarified; he was always a scholar. This accounts for the extreme unworldliness of his biography. Watts's scholarly life flowed tranquilly through a turbulent world. From the corruption of the reign of Charles II to the new order established by the House of Hanover, the turbulence of English revolution whirled past his ministry. During the three score and ten years of his fragile life the British Empire was born abroad and the seeds of social reformation planted at home. Violence lurked on country roads, and war was the constant curse of nations. In spite of all, Watts's personal life was undisturbed, untroubled, unswerving. Milner very correctly admitted that "the love of extraordinary incident and strange adventures" must be disappointed in Watts, for such a scholarly life as his could only interest one "who delights . . . to trace the operations of a mind dwelling its energies to the best interests of the human race, to behold an individual abstracted from earthly concerns, pursuing in the silent retirement of his closet designs of a purely spiritual and intellectual character."³⁰

²⁹Watts, *Hymns*, pp. 10-11.

³⁰Milner, *Watts*, p. 25.

In October 18, 1806, at the age of twenty-two, Watts left his spiritual retreat in Redhampton to enter the house of Sir John Barroff. This great red brick mansion, situated near the road on the north side of Church Street in Stone-Devington, was a fitting and impressive symbol of a family representative of the highest nonconformist leadership of the time, Sir John Barroff, intimate friend of the revered Dr. John Owen, and twice twice elected to Parliament for Leicestershire, and once to the office of high sheriff of the county. His wife was Elizabeth, daughter of Lord General Plunket. In this family, as before in Barroff's son, John, Watts entered into a sphere of living from which he never departed.³¹

It was in this home that several important aspects of Watts' life pattern were permanently established. Here he enjoyed "intimacy with . . . gentlemen of great abilities and extraordinary piety . . . conversing with people of real worth, and taking a large survey of the varieties of mankind from the numerous company that at one time, and on one occasion or another resided in the lady's family or made visits to her."³² Here he began to establish his habits to allow time for additional study, and to discipline his mind by composing for young John the material later published as his *Fourteen* textbook on logic. At this time, too, on his twenty-fourth birthday, July 17, 1806, he preached

³¹Watts, Journal, pp. 45-46.

³²Journal, p. 111.

his first sermon to the congregation at Beth Lane where the Burtons were members.³³

The remaining fifty years of Walter's life and ministry revolved around this distinguished congregation. Historically, the Beth Lane church resulted from a union of two congregations: that presided by the ailing Joseph Caryl from his house at St. Margat, and that of the celebrated Dr. John Owen. Shortly after Caryl's death the union was consummated on June 3, 1673, under Owen's leadership, with 171 members.³⁴ From the beginning, the membership of the church included such eminent names as Lord Charles Howard, Sir John Burleigh, Colonel Lambourn, Colonel Berry, Lady Anne, Lady Jane Villiers, and the countess Mrs. Venetia, granddaughter of Oliver Cromwell.³⁵

At the time of Walter's maiden sermon, Dr. Isaac Hemy, the scholarly but shrewish and unpopular pastor of the church, acted as assistant. Shortly thereafter Walter was chosen. In April, 1704, Dr. Hemy resigned. Immediately the church turned to Walter. But, as a result of "dread and weakness" contracted in 1695, hope of his acceptance was abandoned. Both the elderly William Newman and the young and fiery Thomas Bradley were called. Both refused. Only then, and after much prayer, did Walter accept the call on March 8, 1705.

Ten days later he was solemnly ordained in the office of pastor. The five ministers participating on this occasion were Thomas Row,

³³Walter, "Memorable Affairs," in Reed, *ibid.*

³⁴Wilson, *History of Dissenting Churches*, I, 213, 271.

³⁵*Ibid.*

William Clark, Thomas Collins, Thomas Higley, and Samuel Price. Thomas Price, Nellie's old teacher, who was chosen to preach the ordination sermon, took as his text Jeremiah 3:12, "And I will give you pastors according to my heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding."²⁶

The influence of the new pastor soon made itself felt. The hitherto lame congregation, depleted by Dr. Cheney's unpopularity, so increased in size that by mid-summer 1878, larger quarters had to be found. For four years services were held in Emma Plummer's Hall. From there, in 1878, the congregation again moved to a newly constructed meeting house on Bay Street in White Horse-Town, Nellie's Place, St. Mary Ann.²⁷ Continued growth of the congregation and poor health necessitated the choice of Samuel Price as assistant pastor in July, 1879. Ten years later, with Nellie's full approval, he was named co-pastor. Participating in the ordination was a select group of London pastors, including Smith, Briggs, Collins, Higley and Price. In a spirit of simplifying Methodist brotherhood, Nellie and Price served the Bay Street congregation as co-pastors until Nellie's death in 1888.²⁸

As he became more and more involved in his pastorate, Nellie's time with the Harveys less gradually lessened. "By clear degrees he removed from Harveys to St. Ann. Nellie's is the exception." Paul Cheney suggests that the eight years Nellie spent with the Harveys fairly say

²⁶Wicham, *History of Birmingham Churches*, III, 1879, I, 189.

²⁷*Ibid.*, I, 194.

²⁸Paul Cheney, "Editor's Introduction," in Jonathan Edwards, *Friend of the Will* (New Haven, 1957), p. 30.

have increased his interest in America. It was Holles who "founded the first professorship of mathematics and natural philosophy at Harvard,"¹⁹ and, with the advice of Watts, placed Isaac Newton as the first occupant of the chair.

During the early years of his pastorate Watts's first two books appeared, Logic Method in 1706, and Logic and Religious Usage in 1707. These established his position as poet and hymn writer. In 1708 he also published as Dean Samuel Richardson and A. James President of William's Hall. Except for these publications, however, it must be admitted with Davis, "We do not have very much concerning Watts's activities during these years."²⁰

One chain of related events beginning in 1712, however, so affected the remainder of Watts's life that no biographer may overlook their influence. In September of that year Watts "was seized with a violent fever which left his nerves permanently affected." "Almost all the violence of my disorder, and the tireless toils of it . . . I and such else," says Watts, "to preserve the machine of animal nature in such order as regularly to exercise either the man or the Christian." From the experience, however, he achieved a faith and dedication which, lasting satisfactions to his life, are revealed in his prayer:

O Lord, great Mercies, those plying me
 For my long neglect, and with smiling heart
 And powerful intercession spend'st on me
 With all my groans before the Father-God
 Bear up my prostrate soul; thy holy instant
 Shall believe all my sacrifice of joy;

¹⁹ Davis, Watts, p. 15.

And bring those moments grateful to his own,
 My heart and life, my hope and every power
 Snatch'd from the grasp of death, I have devoted
 To thy blessed hands as offering to his name.
 Amen, Philadelphia.⁴⁰

Watts never forgot the hard lessons of sickness. Years later he said, "When the nerves are relaxed, and the tabernacle of the body tottering, the soul perishes of the infirmities of this poor fleshly engine."⁴¹ Feeling not escape, but rather "victory over the complete and protracted of nature," he believed that "illnesses are the servants of our Lord Christ; [who] can his pains and anguish of body go or come as he pleases; nor can they seize you without his permission, nor tarry with you beyond his appointed season."⁴²

Life-long illness made such a diversion as early speculation for Watts. Though he recovered sufficiently to partially perform his duties in 1716, sympathetic attacks followed. On February 21, 1718, in dedicating his first volume of sermons to his church he admitted his complete incapacity. In 1719, sickness prevented his from delivering the charge to the candidates at John Baker's ordination. By 1721, recurrent illness had left Watts with "attenuated frame" and "tremulous hand." In 1725, he was "lill, depressed, and suffering from extreme physical debility."⁴³ Four years later he suffered "a paralytic disorder,"

⁴⁰Watts, "Open of Prayers for Recovery," in "Religious Jewels," Edinb. 27, 771.

⁴¹Watts, "Holy Fortitude or Resistance Against Fear," in "Sermons on Various Subjects, Divine and Moral," in Edinb. 1, 117.

⁴²Edinb. 1, 74.

⁴³Edinb. Edinb. 2, 32.

though the effects of this mild stroke were temporary. Through all these years the old nervous disorder caused constant insomnia, so that even opium was ineffective to produce sleep. Moreover, he suffered "nervous paroxysms which were severe and distressing, but short in their duration and infrequent in occurrence."¹⁴ In spite of his faith, his infirmities resulted in "serious hypochondriacism."¹⁴ Strangely enough, all the disorders of disease appeared to leave his frail body during his latter years. He suffered only the gradual dissolution of age.

In contrast with this dark shadow of life-long illness, Webb's great sickness in 1718 resulted in the greatest blessing of his life--his entrance into the Kew household, where he came to be nursed back to health. Like Barlogg, Sir Thomas Kew was a dissident aristocrat, a member of the congregation of John New. At various times he had served as alderman, sheriff, and last mayor of London. Elected for services to King William, he was director of "the Bank" and president of St. Thomas' Hospital. In 1700 he married Mary Swanton, a member of Webb's New Street church, and sister of Thomas Swanton, with whom Webb had struck up a close friendship during the time he was tutor to young John Barlogg.

Into this household Webb entered as a sick man invited to stay for a week. Perhaps sympathy for his illness, perhaps admiration for his astuteness, perhaps the memory of his warm friendship with Thomas Swanton, perhaps reasons lost with time, kept him ensnared there as he

¹⁴ibid., pp. 515, 609, 619, 620.

several months of the last until his death thirty-six years later.

Wells testified, "I owe my life under God to their care and kindness."⁴⁵

Because of his personal acquaintance with all concerned, Wilson best summarizes the nature of this long and unusual friendship between Wells and the members of the Snow household:

There he dwelt in a family, which for piety, order, harmony, and every virtue, was no house of God. Here he had the privileges of a country rectory, the frequent house, the spreading lawn, the flowerly garden, and other advantages, to nourish his mind and add his recreation to his study; to yield him, whenever he chose them, most grateful intervals from his laborious studies, and enable him to return to them with re-doubled vigour and delight. Had it not been for this happy event, he might, as he suffered else, have finally, it may be painfully, dragged on through many more years of languor, and inability for public service, and even more profitable study, or perhaps might have even left his grave under the overwhelming load of infirmities in the midst of his days; and thus the church and the world would have been deprived of those many excellent sermons and works, which he drew up and published during his long residence in this family. In a few years after his coming hither Sir Thomas Snow Snow lost his amiable constant mistress, and above the Doctor the same respect and friendship as before, and went happily for his and great comfort hither; for, as her virtues were great, her generosity and amiable were in full proportion; her threat of life was drawn out to a great age, some twenty that of the Doctor's; and thus this excellent man, through her kindness, and that of her daughter, the present Mrs. Elizabeth Snow, who in a like degree beloved and honored him, enjoyed all the benefits and felicities he experienced at his first entrance into this family, till his days were numbered and finished, and like a shoot of corn in its season, he ascended into the regions of perfect and immortal life and joy.⁴⁶

Since the remainder of Wells's life centered in the Snow home, some description of the environment in which he lived becomes important.

⁴⁵Wells, *Wells*, p. 25.

⁴⁶Wilson, *Wilson*, pp. 123-124.

The Almy owned three houses--the country estate of Thatchfield and Stone-Burington, and a London town house on Lion Street. Thatchfield was no less than a palace, and was situated a mile from Chartwell in north Hertfordshire.⁴⁷ America long hung about the place. How often Elizabeth had rested, and James I witnessed scenes written by Ben Jonson. In nearby Chartwell the gardener Brownell, Richard, died in the year of Vivia's great sickness. On the table in the Chartwell library were volumes compiled by Vivia for deceased friends. How among the studies and gardens of Thatchfield was "everything that could excite the memory, or stir or soothe and lull the imagination." Briefly, it was here that the earlier years of Vivia's stay with the Almy family were spent.

The dearest home to Vivia, however, was the Almy mansion in rural Stone-Burington. It was peaceful, and productive of security and cheer. Such security was important to Vivia. The little rural village of no more than a hundred houses was surrounded by woodland. The lanes, the old bridge, the river flowing to the Thames and out to sea, the garden, and the lanes of yew trees quieted his frayed nerves. Here, too, were rich and tender memories--memories both of his own school days and his tutoring of young John Burleigh. Here he had walked and talked with Thomas Norton in the closest friendship of his life.

Even without such memories, however, the Almy mansion was a source of security and beauty. From Church Street the property was

⁴⁷See Herbert R. Thompson, *Elizabeth and Henry in Hertfordshire* (London, 1886), pp. 1-3.

entered by low gates that swung back to admit the carriage to a circular drive. From this point the house, which stood considerably farther back than the neighboring Flaxbush House, presented an imposing sight. The great red brick dwelling with stone gables, roof, garrisoned hips and chimneys with bay, square, octagonal, and square. The expansive flat roof was broken by five friendly cupolas in front, and the promise of warmth from six tall chimneys. Just beyond the roof line was a wide balcony, and in the very center a large turret surrounded by glass windows. Beyond the house and the well-kept garden, stretched the park where cedar groves and avenues of pop laves blended into the woodlands beyond.

When the carriage stopped wide steps invited the visitor, and a great grating screen door opened on a spacious entrance hall. The first door to the right led to a small library used by Nellie as a study. Just opposite was a small parlor, Lady Knapp's sitting-room; and to the left, a "painted" parlor, the panels of which were filled with landscapes and figures from Italy. There, too, were painted the four characters of Youth, Age, Death, and grief done by Nellie herself. Further down the hall stately stairs led to the bedrooms above, and provided a way to the expansive view and quiet seclusion of the turret so often used by Nellie as a retreat for meditation and writing.

Nellie's study was a room of particular character. At the entrance hung in a row from wire grained lines from Sicily. Then translated, they read:

He the cynic as should friend Lavigne, or, when
 should'd will not protect his praise
 He in those moments taking justice round, at other's
 cost the funds the life around,
 He the with Japanese deals not his line,
 And says to me that never will his cry,
 He the still talks and runs not right or wrong
 And glories in his flippancy of tongue,
 He the before through levity of mind
 Th' important matters to his breast consign'd,
 This was the black indeed; would the poet,
 For let your laurels wait him for your guest.⁴⁵

Within, the painted walls, now those they were covered with rows of
 well-used books, were placed with paintings from Watts's own brush and
 portraits of selected persons he knew or admired. In the center of the
 far wall was a large Elizabethan fireplace, where burned a fire of
 glowing coals. On the panels on either side of the fireplace were quo-
 tations from Horace. On the one side, "longa est gloria vitia"; on the
 other "sed in infans gaudia, dissimulat, aequa." At the center of the
 room was a small round table. Beside it stood a pedestal on which lay
 an open book, and close by Watts's nose and hat. On the table were a
 vase of flowers, a telescope, the Bible, and, of course, writing materi-
 als. And seated there in a black silk coat and white wig was the
 stunted fragile figure of Isaac Watts.⁴⁶

The events which transpired in the May household are no longer
 discoverable, unless some biographer was discover hidden meanings in the
 writings of Watts himself. Certainly, within the limits of our interest,
 it is enough to repeat with Mrs. S. S. Ball, "The history of [Watts's]

⁴⁵Johnson, Watts, pp. 108-109.

⁴⁶Ball, Watts, pp. 30, 31; 200-201.

life, from the time of his entering the Army house, is merely a history of his work.⁵⁰ It is in his writings rather than in deeds that his life centered.

Wells's Willingness

It was Wells's wish that he should be remembered for his books. Jeremy Bellamy writes:

It was his desire that his character appear from his printed works, and not from any private papers. His friends, so that he committed the care of publishing his books, were expressly prohibited from making a collection of his letters, which might easily have been done soon after his death. The material from which an account of his life can be composed are therefore few; they exhibit a vigorous mind and weak body; a character notable and worthy of imitation.⁵¹

He was always fundamentally a writer. In England he wrote didactic verse; in school he wrote and preserved verses. In England he wrote and published poems, hymns, sermons, essays, and treatises; in old age he continued to write and to revise his earlier writings. Almost everything he wrote, he published. To his writing was an extension of his ministry.

As has already been stated, Wells's First book, Short Lyrics (1795) established his reputation as a poet. The excellence of these poems not only won for them a place in Samuel Johnson's Dictionary of English Poetry, but, before that, wide popular acclaim. A modern scholar,

⁵⁰ Rev. R. C. Bell, Illustrations to English Poetry (London, 1855), pp. 230-234.

⁵¹ Jeremy Bellamy, Memirs of the House, Character, and Writings of . . . Dr. Isaac Wells and Dr. Philip Hodge (London, 1795), pp. 3-4.

T. de Sala Pardo, has credited Verha with keeping alive the spirit of freedom and adventure in an age stifling for imaginative literature. Says Pardo, Verha "rediscovered things that English poets [had] forgotten for a long time, the magic of innocence and tenderness, the beauty of small and humble things, the divine quality of childhood."²² Thus he adds:

It is high time that attention should be called to Isaac Verha's very remarkable and interesting achievements in poetry. It is time that his poems were rated at their true worth, and no longer distanced with the productions of Tolson, Dickinson, Frost and other small fry of the Johnson's Fourth Avenue apartment, or lost in a vast mist of plain conventional abstractions.²³

In this article, Verha's poetry "belongs at least in the literature of poems," whose significance he explains by declaring that by a strange paradox it is "more truly alive after the lapse of centuries than it was in the year it was written."²⁴

Verha, on the other hand, was strongly critical of his own poetry. Asserting that "poetry is not the business of my life, but rather a form of relaxation," he admitted that "very a line needs the file to polish the roughness of it, and every a thought needs richer language to adorn and make it shine." Yet, he confessed, "I have at present neither inclination nor leisure to correct."²⁵ His purpose, he said, was to return poetry to the original source in "its proper station in the temple

²²T. de Sala Pardo, "Isaac Verha and the Adventurous Man," *Images and Poets by Members of the English Association*, collected by George Cockburn (Pemberton, 1917), p. 61.

²³*Ibid.*, p. 64.

²⁴Verha, "Some Lyrics," *ibid.*, p. 117.

of God.⁵⁴ For this purpose, Polish was important.

The publication of Wette's second book, Home and Political Songs (1791), required more than public demand. The Preface to this work suggests that his reason for printing it was to extend the usefulness of "inspections already found helpful to the comfort and edification of societies, and of private persons."⁵⁵ Moreover, this was exactly the request of his brother, Zach, in advocating the publication.⁵⁶

And Wette's hymns did revolutionize psalmody among the churches. Only secondarily Lewis F. Benson declared, "Wette made the model for English hymns just as Johnson did for Latin."⁵⁷ Platte, likewise, claims that "it was Wette's conception of the hymn that became the standard of English hymnody."⁵⁸ While Wette saw need for improvement in all branches of religious instruction, he declared that "of all our religious activities, psalmody is the most negligently managed." Being convinced "that was great occasion of this evil arises from the matter and words to which we confide our songs," he wrote his hymns to correct this defect.⁵⁹

Wette's third major publication, entitled A Guide to Prayer, appeared in 1793. A few years earlier, while in good health, Wette had formed a "private society of younger men, the more desirous to learn to

⁵⁴Wette, "Home Hymns," Wette, IV, 417.

⁵⁵George Benson, History of the Rev. James Wette, D.D. (5 vols.) London, 1846, 1112-13.

⁵⁷Lewis F. Benson, The Hymnody of the Christian Church (Knoxport, 1904), p. 116.

⁵⁸Platte, "Introductory Note," p. 31.

⁵⁹Wette, "Hymns," Wette, IV, 2-254.

pray.⁶⁰ He taught them how to pray he wrote a textbook, later entitled, "And I found my textbook that had answered my design, I had never given myself the trouble of writing this."⁶¹ Then, however, he found an adequate task, he prepared his own material for use in such classes. In his preface to the book he excused the lack of polish and justified the publication by saying that sickness had cut him off from other forms of public service.⁶²

From these first three books—Logic, Logic, Logic, and A Guide to Prayer—a pattern of reasons for all Watts's writings may be formulated. They are: (1) the useful employment of leisure; (2) the creation of a supply where a need existed; and (3) the substitution of published materials for personal preaching made impossible by sickness. These three purposes, linked with great natural genius and intense personal dedication, were to account for the amazing volume and variety of Watts's writings.

It was the first purpose—the useful employment of leisure—which, as he indicated in the following passage, explains his books on astronomy and geography.

It was chiefly in the younger part of my life, indeed, that these studies were my entertainments; and being retired, both at that time, as well as since, upon some occasions, to lead some young friends into the knowledge of the first principles of geography and astronomy, I found no trouble in these subjects written in so very

⁶⁰Watts, "A Guide to Prayer," Works, III, 500.

⁶¹Ibid., pp. 509-510.

⁶²Watts, "A Counsel Against Infirmity," Works, IV, 127-128.

plain and comprehensive a manner as to answer my wishes. Upon this subject I drew up the following papers, and set everything in that light in which it appeared most obvious and easy to me.

An instance of his desire to furnish a supply where a need existed is found in the Preface to his work on readings:

For when I had surveyed grammar, and spelling-books, for this service, I found none of them perfectly answered my design, that is, to lead English readers into an easy acquaintance with their mother-tongue, without embarrassing them to acquire the knowledge of other languages. And though I did not at first set out to write these directions for the public, yet, since they are written, surely I may offer them to the world without offence.⁶²

and as clearer, or more fully expressive example of the last principle--to substitute books for a personal ministry made impossible by illness--may be found than Watts's own words to his congregation at New Market:

As that as my health increases, you may assure yourselves it is devoted to your edification. It often grieves me to think how poor, feeble, and short are my present labours among you; and yet what days of felicity I generally feel after every such attempt: so that I am continually prevented in my design of successive visits to you, by the want of active spirits while I tarry in the city; and if I attempt to stay but a week or two days there, I find a sensible degree of weakness, so that I am constrained to return to the country air, in order to recruit and maintain this little capacity of service.

I thank God heartily, and you are my witnesses, that in my better seasons of health heretofore, and in the intervals of my studies, I was not a stranger of your private families, nor thoughtful of your souls' improvement.

What shall I do now to make up those defects? What can I do now pleasing and profitable to you, than to seize the intervals of my retirement, to review some of those discourses which have assisted your faith and joy in my former ministry,

⁶²Watts, "The Knowledge of the Hebrew and the English Bible May," *ibid.* V, 410-411.

⁶³Watts, "Art of teaching and writing English," *ibid.* IV, 673.

and to put them into your hands. This scribbling of me shall abide with you in your several houses, while I am on disquiet of such public labors, and of personal trouble.

This, my friends, is the true design of sending this volume to the press.⁶⁰

Because of their relationship to an exposition of his grounding theory, several other of Locke's many other books must also be mentioned. Of primary importance in this connection are his Logic (1704) and The Reasonableness of the Way (1714). Though widely separated in time, these were important in content and purpose.

In the Logic Locke recognized as natural logic "the good judgment and prudence that any man exercises in his common concerns of life, without the advantage of learning."⁶¹ Thus his treatise, he considered "a higher attainment, and a farther assistance of our rational power."⁶² Its divided logic sets four principal operations: perception, judgment, argumentation, and disposition. Contrasting scholastic logic as "that empty thing that deals all in dispute and wrangling," he sought to present a way of right reasoning practical both for secular and religious concerns.

The influence of Locke's Logic may be inferred from its exclusive use in Glasgow Academy and its long use in the Universities.⁶³ James Burgh, the eighteenth-century classicist, in suggesting a proper course

⁶⁰Locke, "Preface," Logic, I, Leech-Skelly.

⁶¹Locke, "Logic," Logic, I, 7.

⁶²Introduction, English Education Before the Eighteenth Century, p. 106. See also J. O. O'Connell, "The Life of the Author," in William B. Ewald, The English Education 4 vols.; New York, 1961, IV, 201.

of study, stated, "For the purpose of getting young persons in the way of reasoning justly, Dr. Watts's Logic may with advantage be read and commented on to them."⁶⁷ Some fifty years later Richard Whately praised Watts for "perceiving the inadequacy of the syllogistic theory to the vast purposes to which others had attempted to apply it." He criticized Watts, however, for a basic misconception:

Watts still viewed after the attainment of some equally comprehensive and all-powerful system, which he accordingly attempted to construct under the title of THE ARTS AND MYSTERY OF THINKING--which was to be a method of investigating and properly directing all the powers of the mind; a most magnificent object indeed, but one which not only does not fall under the province of logic, and cannot be accomplished by any one science or system that one even be conceived to wish. The attempt to comprehend or visit a field, is an extension of sciences, but a mere verbal proscription, which leads only to vague and barren declamation.⁶⁸

The Improvement of the Mind, long in the writing and drawn slowly from meditation and experience, was "made up of a variety of remarks and directions for the improvement of the mind in useful knowledge."⁶⁹ Originally intended for one volume, it gradually grew to two. "The first," as Watts says, "lays down remarks and rules for my private knowledge and use, and the second, for my best communications to be others."⁷⁰ Three chapters are devoted to practical problems. Among these are "Of Enquiring into the Causes and Effects of my Thought or Speech, and especially the Cause of the Secret Writing," and "Of Instruction by Branching." Dr. Johnson traced many of the principles advanced in the work to

⁶⁷James Burgh, The Familiar of James Burgh (New York, 1811), p. 162.

⁶⁸Richard Whately, Elements of Logic (New York, 1831), p. 37.

⁶⁹Watts, "The Improvement of the Mind," op. cit., I, 122.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 123.

John Locke, but added that "they were so expanded and modified by Herie, as to confer upon him the merit of a work in the highest degree useful and pleasing."⁷¹ Johnson's evaluation of this "Weaver has the care of instructing others, may be charged with deficiency in his duty if this work is not recommended."⁷² Davis judges the work for making "reason practical by transferring it into a working instrument." "In the Logic," he says, "Herie made reason understandable in the Improvement he made it usable." Davis concludes that "many sections could still be used to advantage by modern students."⁷³

Of special importance in a study of Herie's preaching theory is his Herie's Almost Unheard-of Revival of Practical Religion among Christians, and, Particularly the Protestant Dissenters, by a Sermon Addressed to Ministers and People, in Some Occasional Discourses (1711). This work not only amplifies the intense fervor of his Christian life and ministry, but expounds his theory of effective sermon building and delivery. Thus it affords a frame work about which his scattered instructions concerning preaching may be gathered. Unfortunately, most studies of Herie's writings have neglected this aspect of the Herie's Almost Unheard-of, and interpreted it, as Davis does, as nothing more than an answer to a criticism that had been directed against dissent.⁷⁴ No other single work by Herie, however, is more important in the exposition of his theology.

⁷¹Johnson, Life of the English Poets, III, 305.

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Davis, Herie, pp. 51-52.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 12.

Many other books by Watts could be mentioned as containing rich suggests of preaching theory. Among these, five, chosen scattered historical references will be analyzed later in this study, demand particular recognition. These are The History of the Passions, Inclinations, and Affections, viz. a Brief and Comprehensive Scheme of the Natural Affections of Mankind, and an Account of Their Rises, Returns, Continuance, Effects, and Different Uses in Human Life; to Which are Subjoined Moral and Divine Rules for the Regulation of Government of Them (1701); Reason as the Foundation of Virtue in God and in Creatures, and on Various Subjects Connected Therewith viz. the Means of Liberty and Reasoning the Causes of the Corruption of the Will; the Use of the Understanding in Spirit, Not to Determine the Liberty of God as a Creator, a Governor, and a Redeemer; the History of Intemperance; the Duties of Moral Good and Evil; the Difference between Moral and Political Laws; the Rise and Fall of Man, and the Free Space of God; the Necessity of Faith in the Gospel; and the Christian Scheme of Salvation (1701).

Among the essays Watts published in 1711, "A Brief Scheme of Theology,"² offering a philosophical basis for his concept of method, a controlling principle in his doctrine of sacred composition. Then in 1714, he published Religion, Reasoning which, with a similar posthumous publication, presented Miscellaneous Thoughts in Prose and Verse, on Natural, Moral, and Divine Subjects. Watts's verse manuscripts and personal annotations by which valuable facets of his preaching theory were preserved.

While Watts wrote many other books not as pertinent to our study,

some of these certain references to his preaching theory.⁷⁵ These include textbooks on reading, geography, and astronomy; essays on politics, philosophy, and education; collections and the theory of collections; voluminous writings on theology; varied sermons; and religious apologetics. Samuel Johnson was no more than fair when he declared:

For you have left behind such purity of character as such monuments of laborious piety. [Watts] has provided instruction for all ages, from those who are sleeping their first lessons, to the enlightened readers of Mathematics and Logic; he has left neither corporal nor spiritual nature unprotected; he has taught the art of reasoning, and the extent of the stars.

His character, therefore, must be formed from the multiplicity and diversity of his attainments, rather than from any single performance; for it would not be safe to claim for him the highest rank in any single denomination of literary dignity; yet perhaps there was nothing in which he would not have excelled, if he had not divided his powers to different pursuits.⁷⁶

In his published works was the real fruit of Watts's mind and the standard by which he wished his life to be judged. And here also, complete, though never collected into a separate treatise, is a theory of effective preaching by "the most sensible dissenting minister of the age."⁷⁷ Here is Watts's contribution to the pastor's quest for "still to apply his knowledge, to answer the different purposes of the pastoral charge."

⁷⁵See Bibliography for a complete list of all Watts's writings.

⁷⁶Samuel Johnson, *Life of the English Poets*, III, 307-310.

⁷⁷L. Symonds, *The Life of Rev. Samuel Mills* (2 vols.) I, 70, London, 1890.

Conclusion

In evaluating Watts as a person, his biographers show a common characteristic—the tendency to eulogize. It began with Thomas Gibbons' writings:

He was gentle without ostentation; severe without harshness; humble without disguise; patient without patience or complacency; faithful without narrowness; firm without rigidity; modest without fear; and studious without gloom or stiffness. With equal truth, and in the same manner of description I might add that he was pleasant without levity; mild without weakness; learned without pride; polite without dissimulation; beautiful without vanity or impudence; and pure and temperate without the least shadow of contrary claim.¹⁸

Such praise on the part of Gibbons is understandable, for he and Watts were respected friends and fellow-puritans. Samuel Johnson's biographical sketch, based upon information received through his own friendship with Gibbons, naturally follows the same pattern. But why the tendency to eulogize is the accurate version by Wilson, Bush, Buckley, and Ballou? Why does the recent biography by A. P. Davis begin with great objectivity but end, like all others, in virtual eulogy? At the first Davis asserts, "By all standards purpose has been to present Watts as a typical and significant Pilgrimage figure whose words transmitted to the eighteenth century the evangelical testament inherited in seventeenth-century Puritanism."¹⁹ At the end, however, he finds only two criticisms of Watts: occasional "negligence" due to ill health, and over-kindly. On the positive side, he accepts Watts as "the perfect pattern of the

¹⁸Gibbons, *Watts*, p. 124.

¹⁹Davis, "Watts," *ibid.*, p. vii.

minister of God" to the Americans; as exemplifying "a spirit of Christianity that was far too rare among the eighteenth-century poets"; as characterized by "a healthy intellectual curiosity, a generous charitable disposition, a cheerful attractive friendliness, and even good business ability"; as possessing "an excellent memory, indefatigable industry, and inexhaustible energy"; as being "a facile writer, a quick thinker, a shrewd observer, and an apt learner."²⁰

His final statement is this:

I conclude this review of Veria's character feeling that in spite of the few failings which he possessed, he was essentially an admirable person. Charitable, plain, gentle--his gentleness was tinged with just enough worldliness to make him human. Very few figures in his century have been so universally beloved, and few have been so worthy of such love.²¹

Actually, Veria speaks only fact when he asserts, "From his day down to ours, the character of Isaac Veria has received the full share of praise."²²

In the face of this long-established reputation, we shall be surprised Veria! One thing is certain--he was an unusually successful person. Success as a person has its own criteria. Chief among these are nobility of character, personal dedication to the work, loving acceptance by the people, and recognition of achievement. In each area Veria excelled.

²⁰ibid., pp. 216-217.

²¹ibid., p. 217.

²²ibid., p. 216.

Wells's saintliness is attested to by his writings, his holy living, and the impression he made on others. Such a hymn as "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross," is a saintly conception. As Albert Howard Bailey declares, "In this combination of imagery, insight, and passion, Wells reaches the height of devotional poetry."⁸¹ Wells's personal conduct followed a pattern of Puritan righteousness. Not only is there no record of sinful deviation in his life, but his writings are often deliberate quests for methods by which the emotions may be made to serve God, lustily achieved, or values applied to daily life. The impression Wells made upon others caused it to be said, "However he goes, he is regarded with reverence and love."⁸²

Wells's dedication to his work as a pastor is attested to by his achievements. The long and varied list of his writings, combined with his many sermons, superimposed upon the equally long chronicle of his sickness, remains the unanswerable demonstration both of his brave spirit and his dedication to the service of God and man. It is on the basis of Wells's writing ministry that Davis asserts, "Wells has a place of some significance as a religious thinker in the eighteenth century; as a religious thinker, he is without an equal."⁸³

For can there be any doubt that people loved Wells. His co-pastor, Samuel Byrnes, declared to be treated no more kin or gentle and directed

⁸¹Albert Howard Bailey, The Gospel in Poetry (New York, 1900), p. 70.

⁸²John C. Baugh, John Wesley and His Friends (New York, 1891), p. 24.

⁸³Davis, Wells, p. 11.

that Jesus chose to written upon his tombstone:

Here lies the body of Dr. Samuel Price, who served with the truly Rev. Dr. Watts in the gospel, under the character of his secretary and co-pastor forty-five years, to whose distinguished goodness and conduct he has been highly obliged to great a part of his life. He died in hopes of being together with the Lord, the twenty-first of April, 1756.⁸⁰

Watts's friends cared for him as a privilege. When after thirty years of residence in Lady Anne's household, he apologized to her for the length of his stay, she is said to have replied, "Sir, that you took a long thirty years visit, I consider as the shortest visit my family ever received."⁸¹ When sickness rendered Watts incapable of performing his pastoral duties, the members of his congregation loyally and lovingly continued their support and relationship.

Finally, it is apparent that Watts's achievements were recognized. John Milneburgh and Stephen Barker, mentioned, the Doctor of Divinity degree on Watts in 1755. Tyerman states that Watts was "the most notable dissenting minister of the age."⁸² A. S. Fetherstone declares that Watts "had a great reputation in his own day, not only as a most eloquent preacher, but as a philosopher."⁸³ Following his quiet release to "the field to sow" on December 25, 1758, the Christianian Magazine carried

⁸⁰ Walter Wilson, The History and Antiquities of Dissenting Churches (3 vols.; London, 1800), 2, 328.

⁸¹ Augustus Toynale, "Some Reflections of the Life of Dr. James Watts," The Works of Augustus Toynale (4 vols.; London, 1791), 29, 127.

⁸² Tyerman, The Life of Whitefield, 1, 78.

⁸³ A. S. Fetherstone, English Men and Masters in the Eighteenth Century (London, 1889), p. 328.

This simple but appropriate eulogy

Isaac Weiss, B. D., a truly ingenious and accomplished person, as well in public literature as divinity and the sciences, of which his writings as well as personal acquaintance testify, and no less exemplary for conduct, piety, and solid virtue, -- He was a dispassionate statesman, but loved by all parties.⁵⁰

Early a night funeral was accorded to his memory in Westminster Abbey.

Weiss's body was carried by six ministers--the Independents, the Presbyterians, the Baptists--to rest in Bunhill Fields, the burial ground for dissenters. Above the grave six John Hartogs and Lady Anne raised a monument to the memory of their dear friend and pastor. Upon this memorial was inscribed the epitaph composed by Weiss himself in which he summed up the length of his life but the years he was pastor.

ISAAC WEISS, B.D.,

Pastor of a Church of Christ in London, Successor of the Rev. Mr. Joseph Caryl, Dr. John Wren, Mr. David Clarkson, and Dr. Isaac Chauncy, after Fifty Years of Faithful Labour in the Gospel, interrupted by Four Years of Unhappy Sickness, was at last dismissed to Rest.

November XXV. A.D. MDCCCLVII. AET. LXIV.

O God, + O, Assent from the body, granted with the Lord God, LXX. 4. When Christ, who in our life, shall appear with his in glory.

IN THE WEST CHURCH⁵¹

⁵⁰ Continental Magazine, XVIII (Nov., 1794), 303.

⁵¹ Parker, Remains, Epitaph, I, 2110.

CHAPTER II

WATTS'S PREACHING PERSPECTIVE

Having surveyed Watts's life and reviewed his writings, let us now seek to discover the intellectual position from which he viewed the work of preaching. In this perspective which, of course, principally determined his homiletics. His decisions about what truths should be preached, what applications should be made, what names and words should be used for efforts to make were all based more or less directly upon this point of reference.

Watts's intellectual perspective--in fact, that of any preacher--may be discovered by asking his answers to five questions. The first is sociological: What is his conception of the relationship of organized religion to government, the life of society, and the aims of the individual? The second is philosophical: What is his conception of an intellectually acceptable criterion for religious certainty? The third is ecclesiastical: What decisions or positions of organized religion does he recognize? The fourth, personal: What are his notions of the ideal layman, church, and pastor? The fifth, theological: What doctrine does he believe should be preached?¹

Intellectual

The degree to which pastors answer their preaching in terms of

¹In this connection see Arthur W. Diamond, Preaching from the Bible (New York, 1941), p. 47; Lewis G. Bruner, Representative Modern Preaching (New York, 1944), pp. 111-112.

social responsibility varies with the importance they place on the relationship between religion and government, on social problems, and on personal ethics. Voltaire's writings show a varying sensitivity to these problems.

Government and Religion

During his lifetime Voltaire witnessed a revolution in the relation between religion and government. In 1685, when he was fourteen, the Clerical Revolution brought security to the Britishish Church and toleration to the dissenters. The end of the Stuarts and the restoration of the House of Hanover came in his middle life. Before his death Voltaire saw in 1745 the collapse of the Young Pretender. By these events England was saved from religious persecution, and the Constitution from divine right. Religion and political toleration were victorious.²

In several of his writings Voltaire indicated his interest in these affairs of government. At the death of William III, his patriotism was expressed by an ecloguistic poem eclogu

Peux liberté to whiches droit,
Voilà ton sort! mon sort sur ton sort,
William, the courage of spirits part,
The art of princes yet returns.³

At the coronation of Anne, he described in lyric style the pomp of the Church of England.

²See E. E. Evans and Mary Rasmussen (eds.), English Historical Documents, 1714-1760 (2d edn; London, 1957), I, 361.

³Voltaire, "An Eclogu on King William III," in "Three Systems," ibid., IV, 195.

None at thy side, and in thy highest smiles
 Flaming in stream of gold the clouds,
 To bless thy moments, and assist thy hands,
 And angels will round her be radiant crowns.¹

It is evident from the same poem, however, that Watts regarded the rights of nonconforming churches to be protected. He particularly pictured dissenting churches as a humble but secure abode under the Queen's garden care:

There at a humble distance from the throne
 Dwelt once the Queen: her house all her own,
 Unapproach'd, yet not shut out, nor afraid,
 Her laws religious, nor affects the shade
 Cheerful and plain'd she not promise to share
 In thy parental gifts, but sees thy garden care.²

At the nation birth of George I (June 10-12, 1717), Watts expressed his fervent patriotism, urging his congregation to pray "that the heirs of the crown descended from this illustrious house may put on the throne of Great Britain in a long and perpetual succession."³ Characteristic of his political attitude in general was his statement, "Glanced in my bed I dream that he has appointed me to act my part in Great Britain, while it is a land of civil light."⁴

The scholarly presentation of Watts's views on the relation between government and religion is to be found in A Ser. Essay on CIVIL Power in Things Sacred, published in March, 1719. This essay clearly stated the

¹Watts, "To Her Majesty," in "Poems Lyricus," Watts, IV, 453.

²Id.

³Watts, "The Religious Improvement of Public Events," Watts, I, 416.

⁴Watts, "The Pious Philosopher," in "Religious Sentences," Watts, IV, 317.

case for the dissenters' unsuccessful bid to repeal the Test and Corporation Acts.⁸ It was, however, a reasoned exposition of the principles and practices of religious liberty.

England, Vattel said in this essay, was an ideal mixture of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy. Thus the nation was secured from internal and external dangers, and also guarded "from any dangerous invasions that might be made upon it by any one of these three powers themselves."⁹ In particular form of government could claim divine right.¹⁰ Government arose out of a compact: the governors assume the responsibility of protecting the rights of the citizens; the governed assume the responsibility of assisting the acts of government with necessary "tongue, sword, and purse."¹¹ Vattel emphasized the limited nature of this compact, however. "The governed," he said, "do not consent to part with any liberties of some nature, but only so far as is necessary for civil government and their common protection, security, and peace."¹²

On the basis of this democratic principle, Vattel advocated a high degree of religious freedom. "Civil government," he declared, "is the proper size and design . . . built on direct trust or authority beyond the benefit of man in this world." Rather "the things of religion, are the affairs of a future state, and within the jurisdiction, any farther than they have a most evident reference to the natural and civil welfare

⁸Vattel, *ibid.*, pp. 124-125.

⁹Vattel, "A New Essay on Civil Power in Things Sacred," *ibid.*, VI, 6.

¹⁰*ibid.*, p. 1.

¹¹*ibid.*

¹²*ibid.*

of man in the present life."¹³ As long as no public rights are endangered, Watts felt that civil government has no right to prohibit the formation of voluntary religious societies or to compel their conformity in church practices.¹⁴ Except in the case of papists, religious affiliation was held to be no obstacle to preferment in public office.¹⁵ Because of their allegiance to a foreign power and their history of persecution, however, papists should be excluded from all public offices.¹⁶ Watts sided with the Quakers' refusal to swear an oath, but he objected on principle to taxation for church support.¹⁷ In short, while Watts recognized that national and individual strengths stemmed from the rule of Christian government, he advocated virtual separation of church and state.

Giving John Locke the major credit for his commitment to religious toleration, Watts testified, "His abstracted Essay of Toleration . . . triumphed over all the remnant of my prejudices on the side of bigotry, and taught me to allow all men the same freedom to choose their religion, as I claim to choose my own."¹⁸ From the nature of Locke's questions both in the *Essay* and in his answers, however, it is obvious that his belief in toleration was also rooted in the Bible.

Social Ills and Religion

Watts's concern with social problems did not equal the preoccupation of his political philosophy. Yet the needs of early eighteenth-century English society were appalling. Poverty, menacing the national

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

sanitary, resulted in the Poor-Laws Act of 1795. Uncontrolled disease as increased the London death rate among the poor that only constant recruiting from the country maintained the population.¹⁸ Many poorer children survived but a year or two of the heartless parish working system.¹⁹ One drinking was a national disease. Amusements were brutal: dog-baiting, prize fighting, bull baiting, and cock fighting. It has been said, "The eighteenth-century Englishman could not even amuse himself without causing pain."²⁰ The level of education was low. Laws were savage, jail fever as almost universal among prisoners. Even in the naval service, consumption and scurvy were epidemic.²¹ Social evils cried aloud for rectification.²²

Wells's lack of concern for social reformation probably was rooted in two beliefs: first, social evils were denunciations of man's depravity; second, existing class inequalities were proved in the provisions of God. His attitude toward was illustrated the first principle; that toward poverty the second.

The wars which dominated the historical imagination from 1650-1713 created a vivid picture in Wells's imagination.²³ He described "unknown multitudes . . . bred up in this bloody trade, . . . driven by their princes against their will, . . . put under a necessity of killing their

¹⁸ Ross and Rossini, Historical Documents, I, 31.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 32.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid., pp. 42-43.

²² W. Hallmark and Elizabeth M. Taylor, Civilization--Past and Present 12 vols., Chicago, 1947, II, 25-26, 48.

²³ Ibid., II, 77-80.

fellow-creatures, or being killed by them.⁴⁵ Yet, instead of pronouncing a moral judgment against war, he merely states: "Would this have been the fate of mankind, if they had stood in perfect innocence or if all nations were not born in their original purity?"⁴⁶ War was only another argument to be added to sickness, sin, and death, by which man was proved a degenerate creature. Such social ills were considered beyond the salvation of the individual. While not blind to such evils, Watts felt no challenge to write against them.

Again, Watts was aware of the poverty about him. In spite of the "millions of human creatures, in all the nations of the earth, . . . forced to support a wretched life by hard labour of the body."⁴⁷ He was aware of ten thousand lower class families in Britain making hard shifts to "keep out of famine, and support life."⁴⁸ Yet the misery of lanes of crowded tenements where whole families existed in a single windowless room; the stench of the women plying at the barrow stalls about the city-street; the darkness and squalid state of the tenement dwellings; the filth and wretched filth of those who mark by their votes--in short, the social evils of poverty--provoked only his mild sympathy.⁴⁹ "For . . . wretched life," Watts, like other thinkers of the time, wrote Schiller, "could only prescribe, not a reorganization

⁴⁵Watts, "Is Man a Degenerate Creature?" in "Tales and Lectures of Scotland," *ibid.*, VI, 71.

⁴⁶*ibid.*

⁴⁷*ibid.*, p. 61.

⁴⁸*ibid.*

⁴⁹William Charles Lewis, *Three Years Through London* (New Haven, 1941), pp. 3-29.

of society, not charity.²⁰ After all, Watts asserted, "the great evil not wisely retained, in the course of his providence to all ages, that among mankind there should be some rich and some poor."²¹ To the poor were assigned the menial services and consequent workday in the realm the ministry of charity. "The distinctive note of Puritan teaching," declares E. E. Schattschneider, "was individual responsibility, not social obligation."²² Watts shared in this blindness of his age.

In addition to the benefits of charity Watts did advocate for further aids which should be extended to the poor. First, he contended, their children should receive some education. "Let them at least be taught their letters," he pleaded.²³ Then, of course, he believed the poor should hear the gospel. He specified, "We let the servant be strictly instructed, when Providence may afford you an opportunity to speak a word to their souls."²⁴ Beyond these alleviations, however, Watts felt no social responsibility.

Personal Vice and Religion

In the area of personal vice, on the other hand, Watts shared

²⁰Richard A. Ballou, The Social Basis of Religious Leaders, 1600-1800 (London, 1946), p. 125.

²¹Watts, "An Essay Towards the Encouragement of Charity Schools," Works, II, 128.

²²E. E. Schattschneider, Religion and the Rise of Capitalism (New York, 1906), p. 177.

²³Ibid., II, 120.

²⁴Watts, "An Noble Attempt Towards the Revival of Perished Religion," Works, III, 71.

shared considerably. His attitude was that of "pastor" in the original meaning of the word—"shepherd." In spite of sickness and forced absence, he stayed near his people. Watts and his congregation regarded one another in their hearts. This "shepherd heart" also affected Watts's attitude toward the individual and his sin. On the one hand, Watts supported his cause strongly because he loved his people. Seeing his as their enemy, he was even aroused. On the other hand, Watts's pastoral heart motivated him to attempt to understand and assist the sinner. His attitude reflected his conception of God's mercy:

Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord
Pitieth them that fear him.
For he knoweth our frames; he remembereth that we
are dust.²⁵

Watts's condemnation of drunkenness offers a concrete example of his position. Exploring the Sermon's "eternal figures," he reminded his people that "there is a great degree of likeness between our forefathers' intemperance, and their children's of late posterity." Not instead of a killing spirit, such as Thomas Hooker might have poured out, he appealed to their better nature by confessing, "You would think such a spectacle as this . . . should be enough to fright our lips the stream of liquor, and to set a guard upon ourselves in the hour of temptation."²⁶

A second example, his condemnation of gambling, illustrated Watts's use of reason rather than literature in remonstrating against

²⁵Isaiah 63:13-14.

²⁶Watts, "Christian Morality," in "Sermons," *ibid.*, I, 251.

sivful practices. Watts was heavily aware of such establishments as Knave's Club in Pall Mall. Here, it is said, "they played on the violence of 40 each week; and generally there was 10,000 apiece on the table."³⁷ After discussing the evil with Social Real, Watts turned his people of this "fatal error." "If they win they are allowed still to stand, while . . . each runs on their sides; if they lose, they are tempted to another and another cast of the die."³⁸ But Watts's condemnation was an appeal to reason. He pointed out that gambling develops extravagance, destroys thrift, teaches a fever for living beyond one's means, and results in displaying honesty and work. "The evil," he said, "is quite broken off its guard, and virtue and reason have no manner of command. Honest industry is discouraged, and trade, which is the political life of our nation, lies growing and expiring."³⁹

Watts's criticism of the theatre offers a third example of his condemnation of sinful practices. He frankly admired the style of Swain and Versaille, and praised Collier's Time of the Day.⁴⁰ The contemporary English theatre, however, he strongly condemned for its licentious, violence, and ridicule of virtue and religion. By such means, he viewed,

³⁷ Last Journal of Horatio Watts, ed. Francis Howard (3 vols.; New York, 1898), I, 1-13. See also J. R. Sutherland, English Society in the Eighteenth Century (New York, 1961), pp. 285-286.

³⁸ Watts, "A Discourse on the Education of Children and Youth," Watts, V, 379.

³⁹ Ibid., "Christian Morality," in "Sermons," Watts, I, 273.

⁴⁰ Watts, "These Services," Watts, IV, 402; "A Discourse on the Education of Children and Youth," Watts, V, 403.

"the fancy is all over defiled, the vain images rise up upon in the soul, and pollute the feeble attempts of devotion; till, by degrees, secret religion is lost and forgotten."⁴¹ Yet in spite of this strong denunciation, Watts sought to rescue the gold from the dross, insisting that evil is not inherent in the dross, he declared that he was "inclined to think that valuable suggestions might be made of this kind, such as might profit a virtuous audience with interest delight, and even with some real profit."⁴² In short, only with reluctance did Watts relinquish this or any lesser activity to the sole service of evil.

Philosophical

The second major element in understanding Watts's perspective is his criterion of religious truth. In the early eighteenth century this issue was paramount. On the one hand, Locke's Essay Concerning Human Understanding established empiricism as the basis for knowledge and truth. On the other, Bishop Butler, challenged by deism, vindicated the Christian revelation, and Whitefield and Wesley, accused by the academics and intellectual indifference of clergy and people, preached an "enthusiastic" gospel. From this confusion the eighteenth-century pastor had to draw his criterion for the "truth" of what he preached.

First, it must be observed that Watts was deeply influenced by Locke. He described the great philosopher in terms:

⁴¹ Watts, "A Discourse on the Education of Children and Youth," Works, V, 403.

⁴² Ibid., V, 396.

Loose has a soul wide as the sea,
 Calm as the night, bright as the day
 There may his vast ideas play,
 But feel a thought within!^{44, 45}

As has already been stated, he also accepted Locke's view of religious toleration. Giving high value to human reason, he stopped, as we shall see, just short of Locke's final position.

Locke's opposition to intolerance carried him to a philosophical position that had critical implications for religion. In Locke's view, the great enemy to tolerance was dogmatism. Seeking a means to subvert intolerance by assigning certainty to reason alone, he initiated a systematic inquiry into the nature of human knowledge.⁴⁶ Locke's position, briefly stated, was that all our knowledge comes from sense experience; the mind is a blank tablet; there are no innate ideas; images impress themselves upon the mind from external objects; such images are the basis of our knowledge.⁴⁷ In reference to religion, Locke, shifting the liability of reason to discover all truth, nevertheless insisted that revelation must be tested by reason. revelation could not contradict reason.⁴⁸

Locke himself was in sympathy with revealed religion and wrote

⁴⁴Locke, "Human Letters," Works, IV, 460.

⁴⁵G. A. Smith, The English Philosophers from Bacon to Mill (New York, 1903), p. 272n1.

⁴⁶Arthur Cooper Taylor, A Student's History of Philosophy (New York, 1903), p. 290.

⁴⁷G. A. Smith, John Locke (London, 1907), p. 300.

to being associated with the Greeks.⁴⁷ But Locke's personal allegiance did not alter the effect of his doctrines. Faith built upon his admission to reason.⁴⁸ Reason liberalism was initiated.⁴⁹ The theological significance of Locke's position is summed up by C. E. Gregg:

He and his contemporaries agreed that the Scriptures accorded with the canons of sound reason; but the fact remained that the Bible was no longer the final and absolute standard. However it might stand the test, it did have brought to the bar of another court.⁵⁰

In short, Locke accepted the revelation of the Bible, but only because he considered it in accord with reason.

While Watts differed from Locke in several respects, the one particular distinction lies in the limitation Watts placed upon the authority of reason. To him, reason was subordinate to revelation. Reason interpreted rather than substantiated. Reason only judged the meaning of revelation. Watts explained reason's office in these words:

It is reason that judge whether such a doctrine or such a duty be contained in this gospel, or may be justly deduced from it: It is the work of human reason to compare one scripture with another and to find out the true sense of any particular text by this means: And it is reason also that give the sentence whether a doctrine, which is pretended to be contained in scripture, be contrary to the eternal and unchangeable relations and reasons of things; and if so, then

⁴⁷Henry C. Robbins, History of Christian Doctrine (2 vols.) New York, 1909, II, 81.

⁴⁸E. E. Schattsch, A Sketch of the History of Dogmatics (2 vols.) New York, 1907, II, 103.

⁴⁹Richard E. Stoddard, English Liberalism in Eighteenth Century England (Oxford, 1904), p. 179.

⁵⁰C. E. Gregg, From Puritanism to the Age of Reason (Cambridge, 1900), p. 226.

reason may pronounce that this doctrine is not from God nor may be given us by divine revelation. Reason, therefore, both its office and proper province, even in matters of revelation; yet it must always be confessed, that some propositions may be revealed to us from heaven, which may be so far superior to the limits and sphere of our reasoning powers in the present state, that human reason ought not to reflect them, because it cannot fully understand them, nor clearly and perfectly reconcile them, unless it plainly sees a natural necessity in them, a real impossibility, or a plain inconsistency with other parts of divine revelation.⁵¹

The second contemporary influence on Hodge's conception of religious certainty was so-called "orthodoxy." According to Locke, the "orthodoxists" substituted inward impulses for reason to the extent that "theater groundless opinions come to settle itself strongly upon their fancies, in an illumination from the spirit of God, and presence of divine authority."⁵² To Locke's criticism, Hodge added the objection that such "orthodoxy" substitutes personal impressions for the revelations of Scripture.⁵³

In one respect, therefore, "orthodoxy" and "rationalism" were similar. Both rejected the authority of the revelation of the Bible. Yet while rationalism went beyond the final judge, "orthodoxy" gave individual intuition the same honor.⁵⁴

⁵¹Hodge, "Bible Approach," *Logic*, III, 45.

⁵²John Locke, "An Essay Concerning Human Understanding," *The English Works of John Locke*, ed. John A. North (New York, 1903), II, 39, 39a.

⁵³Hodge, "A Rational Foundation of a Christian Church and the Basis of Christian Communion," *Logic*, I, 734.

⁵⁴Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology* (3 vols.; New York, 1875), I, 42-43.

As White had gone part way with Locke's rationalism, so he went part way with "enthusiasm." He accepted the fact that the Christian has an "inward witness of the spirit of God to the truth of the gospel." In his estimation, however, "It [was] not *revelation*, *inspired*, and *extraordinary* business . . . because it was based upon the teachings of the Bible rather than unfounded personal impressions."²⁵ It is this belief in the "inward witness" which caused White to declare that White "spent a lifetime trying to define it [*"enthusiasm"*] into the religion of his day."²⁶ On the other hand, White rejected the essential of "enthusiasm," by insisting on the supremacy of Scripture's teaching above individual intuitions. For this reason *Frederick* correctly describes White as "dismissing enthusiasm."²⁷ For this reason, too, White declares that White "had the usual over-sensible lawyer of enthusiasm."²⁸ Davis, thereby, wrongly accused White of *insensibility*.²⁹

White's standing *insensibility* came from a belief in the value of both reason and intuition, but not as final authorities. The authority of truth, White found neither in rationalism nor in "enthusiasm." He declared, "The Bible alone . . . must be my guide . . . Here our faith and conscience may rest safely, in all our inquiries about matters of

²⁵White, "The Inward Witness," in "Reviews," *North*, I, 63.

²⁶Davis, *North*, p. 202.

²⁷Frederick, *Religious Liberalism*, p. 75.

²⁸Davis, *North*, p. 202.

²⁹*North*.

belief or practice.⁴⁰ On this point, White was neither uncertain nor confused. To him, the task of truth was neither to reason nor to inform; it was to *heal*. He used reason and "largest visions," but only to understand and corroborate God's truth. The real solution to the problem of authority lay, White believed, in the Bible, where he found reason satisfied and the heart inspired.

Reconciliation

The third factor determining a man's preaching perspective is revealed by his answer to this question: what are the variants in doctrine, polity, and fellowship in organized religion? When Henry Martineau Rogers presented the Lyman Beecher lectures on preaching at Yale College, he asserted that one reason he accepted the leadership was "to add to showing to the world that Protestant Christianity is essentially one--that while we do not wholly agree, we know at the same time how to differ and yet how to love."⁴¹ This notion of differing, and yet loving, characterized Isaac White.

The Jacob Dittmer Case

In the early eighteenth century organized Christianity presented less clearly marked divisions than it does today. The rigid and separate twentieth-century denominational organizations, directing promotional and missionary activities, are later developments of the "free church"

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White, "Bible Approach," *ibid.*, III, 18.

⁴¹

Martineau Rogers, Lectures on Preaching (New York, 1875), p. 2.

concepts. The few and simple differences among churches in Valla's age are illustrated by an analysis of those which he wrote for his brother Barna.⁶¹

In his classification according to doctrine Valla listed twelve variations: *Atheists, Pelagians, Arians, Socinians, Quakers, Papists, Anabaptists, Sabbatarians, Anabaptists, Calvinists, Lutherans, and Antinomians.*⁶² Since atheists and deists were viewed as opponents of Christianity the number of Protestant divisions was reduced to ten. Obviously, with the possible exception of Quakers and Anabaptists, these divisions referred more to schools of interpretation than to doctrinal cleavages. Doctrinal divisions at this period were internal differences of interpretation rather than separated denominations.

In his classification according to polity Valla listed only three variations: episcopacy, presbytery, and independency.⁶³ The first, episcopacy, was distinguished by the fact that "they was that a bishop is an officer appointed by Christ to oversee churches and their pastors, and in his hands are placed the keys of absolution and communication of every particular church."⁶⁴ The essential of the second, presbytery, Valla saw in the belief "that God hath appointed a synod, or class, or assembly of ministers, or elders, to be superior in power and government to any particular church or officers thereof."⁶⁵ Slightly varied, the essential of the third class, the independents,

⁶¹This analysis, evidently made early in his life, was sent by Isaac Valla to his brother Barna in an undated letter. It is included in Valla, *Works*, I, 400-401.

⁶²*ibid.*

⁶³*ibid.*

⁶⁴*ibid.*

⁶⁵*ibid.*

was the belief "that every church hath all the power of governing itself in itself," . . .⁶¹ Of course, it is obvious that the first type of polity represented, because of articulated national religion, a strongly separate institution, the Church of England. On the other hand, the other concepts of polity represented local congregational methods far more than separate institutions. In fact, of the twelve major seventeenth-century Protestant denominations, only five were in existence at the time of Hutter's classification: Church of England, Presbyterian, Congregational, Baptist, and Quaker.⁶²

The Spirit of Liberty

John White Hutter in discussing ministerial attitudes asserted, "that is essential to the theologian is, that whilst he is silent in his opinions, search in his search for truth, he shall be true in his opinions, -not to allow himself to be excluded from any church."⁶³ Such a spirit of loyalty to conviction, but of love for those of contrary opinion, characterized Hutter. Hutter's tolerance stopped only with "those who believe not the necessary, fundamental and essential doctrines of the Christian religion." Though not to be persecuted or compelled, such persons, he said, should not be received into church membership.⁶⁴

⁶¹Ibid., p. 100.

⁶²"The Church of England," Encyclopædia Britannica, 10th ed., Vol. VIII.

⁶³John White Hutter, "The Preacher," The English Works of John White Hutter [2d vol.] Cambridge, 1893-04.

⁶⁴Hutter, "The National Foundation of a Christian Church and the Form of Christian Communion," Works, V, 714.

Wells defined "uncharitableness" as "overness to such persons who differ with us in little particulars of doctrine or duty which are not expressly and plainly written in the New Testament."⁷¹ Such a "prejudice" placed its walls around charity, on the other hand, he pointed to "the very picture of the gospel," and the evidence of our other virtues.⁷²

In writing its opposing uncharitableness Wells detailed ten sources of this attitude: "a wilful misstatement of nature," "vain conceits of our own opinions," "an avoidance of books disagreeing with our ideas," reading the Bible "with a chain set of notions established beforehand," "failure to reflect" on the grounds of our own opinions, carrying the ideas of others to "a terrible severity" of importance in their effect, magnification of the importance of being disagreed, the "appeal of a party and self-interest," offering value to the idea of agreement, the tendency to make one's head "the chief seat of religion and severely ever suffering it to demand and even the heart."⁷³

Wells's emphasis on charity does not imply that he saw no place for religious differences. Differences of interpretation, he thought, possessed value. By then one's severity in holding "that [is] the substantial" was waned.⁷⁴ Moreover, charity, "the very life of the the disciples of Christ," was thereby put on trial.⁷⁵ Of even greater

⁷¹Wells, "Uncharitableness and Charity United, in Several Exemplifying Essays on the Law and Gospel, Faith and Works," *Wells*, III, 479.

⁷²*Ibid.*, p. 479.

⁷³*Ibid.*, pp. 479-480.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, p. 712.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*

important was the challenge to study and make personal decisions concerning the content of one's own faith.⁷⁶ If study should produce more differences of opinion, Hette felt a greater benefit was "that our souls are hardly drawn out to long for heaven, and just after the state where there is no contention, no dispute."⁷⁷ In addition to such plausible rationalizations, Hette considered theological disagreements as the normal results of such factors as the depravity of man, educational and cultural biases, limited opportunities and capacities for study, and the obscurity of some portions of Scripture.⁷⁸

On one occasion Hette declared that because of his skill in painting, he was asked how he would draw a figure to represent unbelief--ness. His answer reveals that his study actually extended far beyond orthodoxy, for his reply dealt with all Christianity:

I will attempt it, . . . if you will furnish me with a sheet of large paper, and that of the finest kind, to represent the Christian church in this world. First, I will pore it round, and reduce it to a very small compass; then with much ink will I stain the whitenss of it, and before it with many a blot; or the next morning I will stain it through palely with an iron pen; and when I get the last hand to complete the likeness, it shall be covered over with blood.⁷⁹

Forbearance

Obviously the most critical factor in determining a man's preaching perspective is his conception of the goals of the ministry. What is his ideal for the Christian layman? What are the functions of the

⁷⁶Id., p. 714.

⁷⁷Id.

⁷⁸Id., pp. 705-706.

⁷⁹Id., pp. 695-696.

church? What personal aim does he set as a pastor? To these questions Watts gave clear and revealing answers.

Dr. Hiral Hayes

When John Hartopp died, Watts accepted the sad occasion as an opportunity to present his conception of a "dissenter saint." For the first time in thirty years he concluded a "funeral sermon with a distinction and particular character of the deceased."⁸⁰ Watts saw in Hartopp not the average but the ideal dissenter. He specified the qualities he admired by declaring, "When I saw Sir John Hartopp, all that bore him agree that I saw a scholar, a gentleman, and a christian."⁸¹

First, Watts saw in this man the particulars of what dissent meant by "Christian." For, rejecting his own righteousness, Hartopp had "trusted in Christ's righteousness as the great Salvation, and beheld him as his crucified Saviour."⁸² This was initial salvation. Such believers "are born again," Watts declared, "and made new creatures by the grace of the Holy Spirit."⁸³ By this spiritual regeneration "their understandings are enlightened, . . . their wills turned from folly . . . to the faith and love of Christ, and a serious pursuit of holiness."⁸⁴ Moreover, this initial inward step was manifested in Christian conduct.

The just man makes it the business of his life to do works of righteousness, taken in the largest sense; to worship

⁸⁰Watts, "Death and Burial, on the Last Burying Compared and Separate Spirits Made Perfect," Works, II, 4.

⁸¹Ibid., p. 11.

⁸²Ibid., p. 12.

⁸³Ibid., p. 16.

⁸⁴Ibid.

God, to seek his glory, to obey his will, which is the rule of righteousness; to do him all the service on earth that his station and circumstances admit of, and to trust faithfully and justly upon God, and to do them all the good that lies in his power."⁸⁵

Wetse referred the apostle to Burdett as an example, for "his practice in life was agreeable to his Christian principles."⁸⁶ The particulars of practical Christianity in Burdett merited special praise: his service to the nation, and his loyalty to his church. "He employed his time, his spirits, his labour, and his riches," Wetse declared, "for the defence of this poor nation, when forty years ago it was in the utmost danger of popery and ruin."⁸⁷ Wetse boasted not only of Burdett's open love, ready service, and loyal steadfastness in times of rebellion, but of his readiness to take his stand and to protect the oppressed "when the spirit of persecution raged highest in the days of King Charles and King James the second."⁸⁸

Only less important than his Christian character was the fact that Burdett was a scholar. Wetse delighted in the fact that Burdett "had a taste for universal learning," including "ingenious arts," "human sciences," "mathematical speculation," "the actions of heavenly bodies, and light and shade whereby time is measured."⁸⁹ But Wetse especially gloried in Burdett's scholarly concern with religion.

But the book of God was his chief study and his greatest delight. His Bible lay before him night and day, and he was well acquainted with the writers that explained its truth. In his devotion of seeking what the Spirit of God would to him

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 85.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 78.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 78.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 78.

of the original language. For this end he commenced some correspondence with persons whom he was more than fifty years old; and that he might be capable of judging of the true sense of any text in the New Testament, he kept his practical knowledge of the Greek language in some measure even to this period of his life.⁵⁰

Barlogg's most lasting service, Votie believed, was his transcriptions of the sermons of Dr. John Owen. Evidently, Barlogg, who had great speed in transcription, made it a practice to take down the sermons of Votie's distinguished predecessor. Later he climbed his ladder by publishing his sermons.⁵¹

Votie saw Barlogg's Christian character and fruitful scholarship as summed by a brief characterization: he was a "gentleman."

He shone with influence among persons of birth and title as well; while his obliging deportment and affable temper rendered his way of access to all his inferiors, and made him the delight of all his friends. Though he knew that was due to his quality in this world, yet he affected none of the grandness of life, but daily practiced communion and love, and enjoyed the respect of all, without assuming a superior air.⁵²

In the words of Barlogg's character Votie urged the members of his congregation to make their soul and exert their efforts so that each one of them might "become an example of shining holiness in a degenerate world."⁵³

The Function of the Church

Though Votie stood as ideal director within, he knew no ideal church. Nevertheless, he was clear what he considered the major functions of the church to be.

⁵⁰ ibid.

⁵¹ ibid., p. 73.

⁵² ibid., p. 73.

⁵³ ibid., p. 3.

Like other dissenters, Watts saw a real and continuing need for reformation. According to his view, reformation was such a reform, not a reform. Both the Church of England and the dissenting congregations, he considered as constituting the body of Christ.⁵⁴ Despite differences in practice and separation in presence, both were bound by the unity of common faith and functions.⁵⁵ Yet Watts considered dissent necessary, not for the sake of division, but rather so that each might worship "in a more exact conformity to his own appointment," and, consequently, "suffer violence in the christian life" he said.⁵⁶ Thus, the real issue in Watts's view was not, "What do you do differently from others?" It was, "What do you do more than others?"

Watts related his congregation that their "fathers had an heroic character and a very great reputation . . . for strict virtue, for exemplary and sincere piety; they lay the common talk and multitude of those who called themselves the established church."⁵⁷ Warning them that the "enormous day" in which they now lived included the dissenting congregations, he declared, "It is high time to shake our heads, and exclaim, what do we more than others?"⁵⁸

In Watts's day four areas of ministry were considered central in

⁵⁴cf. *The History of the Church*, ed. E. Horton (New York, 1908). "They were called Independents, because they claimed independence of every control, ecclesiastical control, whether by bishop or presbytery, not less than secular; but they sought such independence only in order to become more fully dependent on the Lord's will made known to them, and sufficiently made known, in their church meetings." P. 175.

⁵⁵Watts, "An Exhortation," *Works*, III, 77-81.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, p. 60.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, p. 84.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, p. 60.

the function of the church: praying, singing, catechizing, and preaching.¹⁰⁰ Watts approached each of these activities with an awareness that serviced his thoughtful program for reformation. For by failing to take full advantage of the new freedom, Watts warned, "The protestants may endanger the loss of our reformation by such lapsing negligence, and expose ourselves in the providence of God to more dreadful and bloody persecutions, thereby we may be given up to idolatry, superstitions, and tyranny."¹⁰¹

Watts's approach to the ministry of prayer was detailed and constructive. On the one hand, he gloried "that there are a great number of ministers in our day and nation who are happy in the gift of prayer", on the other, he deplored the arguments over facts, and the accusations of "extraneous" which brought "the gift, grace, and spirit of prayer . . . into glorious ridicule." Then, with practical but spiritual helpfulness, he wrote a Guide to Prayer to meet the needs of those "who were desirous to learn to pray."¹⁰²

Of course, it is in the area of singing that Watts made his best considered contribution. Here, he was strongly critical of contemporary practice. He bluntly declared that English singing was "performed the worst on earth." He deplored that "of all our religious assemblies,

¹⁰⁰Richard Simon, "Directions Given to the Clergy of the Diocese of London in the Year 1704," Diary of Samuel Pepys (London, 1871), pp. 309-310.

¹⁰¹Watts, "An Humble Attempt," Works, III, 100.

¹⁰²Watts, "A Guide to Prayer," Works, III, 115.

perfectly in the most intelligibly arranged," and stated further "that the very action which should alarm us to the most delightful and divine emotions, both not only flatter our devotion, but too often induces our regret, and touches all the springs of conscience within us."¹²²

But Valla did not stay with emotions. As he saw the problem, so he characteristically sought to contribute to its solution. In numerous and revolutionary compositions, he employed subject matter, action, and rhyme "to improve piety, or religious singing, and to encourage the frequent practice of it in public assemblies and private families, with more honor and delight."¹²³

In the matter of instruction by catechism, Valla was never so zealous returned for the effort expended. He strongly criticized the material as ill adapted to the learner's capacity. Yet, believing that "catechizing is the best and highest method for the instruction of children in the principles of religion," he sought to make a constructive contribution. He spent many hours not only in composing catechisms, but also in producing similar rules to guide teachers so that the common sense concerns of religion might be made more intelligible to children.¹²⁴

Finally--and this is the least known to our generation of all his contributions--Valla presented a complete theory for effective pastoral

¹²²Valla, "Lyrics and Spiritual Songs," Opus, IV, 531.

¹²³Valla, "Psalm, Lyrics, etc.," Opus, IV, 183.

¹²⁴Valla, "A Statement on the Way of Instruction by Catechism, and of the Best Manner of Composing Them," Opus, II, 555.

preaching. Both his teaching and his management of his flock were obviously directed toward ministerial studies. Much of his English Ministry was directed toward practicing ministers, and scattered through all his writings were additional directions and suggestions to improve preaching power. There were a body of homiletical theory of such importance that we shall consider the major elements in separate chapters, mentioning here only that it, too, is characteristic of his constructive attempts to meet a need in the function of the church.

In summary, Watts not only sought to analyze the practical needs of the church's ministry; in every major field he made a personal contribution as that work might be done in Christ's work.

A. Parker's Personal Goals

As Watts discovered no ideal church, he knew no ideal preacher. Guided by a Bible concept admitted only in Christ, he was compelled by universal human shortcomings to set goals rather than describe any individual. Here were qualities fixed to perfection in no preacher, but to a degree in every true gospel minister. For in this struggle, for his ideal included righteous character, holy living, consecrated service, godly vision, and divinely empowered preaching. Watts's own words best convey the solemnity and holiness with which he viewed the ministry:

Dear Jesus, the divine Shepherd, appoint me under-shepherd of his flock; use me as constituted pastor in his house, to dispense the mysteries of his grace, and the great things of his gospel; use me as pastor of our ransomed souls; use me as the shepherd of our ransomed brethren in his kingdom here below; use me as the glory of his flock; use me as the earthly pastor in his church! Oh let all that tend

that we do nothing to diminish the titles of dignity and honor which he has put upon us in his words. Let us remember that every dignity brings an equal duty with it; and by fulfilling the various and difficult duties of our holy station, let us make it appear that our office was not conferred upon us in vain.¹⁰⁵

Man of God. To White, every pastor must seek first to be a man of God, for sincere personal religion was "the highest obligation on a preacher of the gospel."¹⁰⁶ With repeated insistence he challenged the laity of his contemporaries.¹⁰⁷ Look not the pastor's own conscience, does not his position in the world, does not his leadership before the church, White argued, demand that he excel in personal devotion and pious life! For these high reasons, he continued, a preacher must have an internal heart-evidence of his personal religion, a "liveliness and power" in his spirituality, and a "growth and increase" in his Christian experience and service.¹⁰⁸ Such characteristics improve the pastor's spiritual understanding, increase his power with God in prayer, sustain him in hardship, establish his reputation as a man of God, and add to the force and influence of his preaching. By these means, declared White, ministers reveal that they "are the sons of God," that their "words are changed from what they were by nature, . . . and thereby give honor to the gospel that is preached."¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵White, "An Noble Attempt," Evangelist, III, 75.

¹⁰⁶Joseph Palmer, George Whitefield (New York, 1871), pp. 14-15.

¹⁰⁷White, "An Noble Attempt," Evangelist, III, 1-2.

¹⁰⁸White, "A Religious Foundation," Evangelist, V, 79.

A Man of Virtues. If gentleness was the initial requirement for a pastor, personal virtues were also a necessity. High among these Watts ranked humility. Despite his own inward conflict with pride amongst the dignitaries in his class, in any case, taking Paul as his example and Christ as the perfect pattern, he exhorted that "we wish the idea of self rather faded that seems to us to be our sin, and . . . raise the idea of our neighbors' a little above that appears to belong to them."¹⁰⁹ Such Christian humility, he claimed, bestowed varied advantages on all men, but was indispensable for an effective ministry. Traits improving a pastor's ministry included dependence upon the grace of God for provision, thankfulness for daily providential favors, patience in affliction, conformity to the character of Christ, and abstinence in the reception and practice of the gospel preached.¹¹⁰

Watts also suggested other concrete virtues to increase the pastor's personal effectiveness and persuasive power: temperance, zeal, dignity, and disposition. Temperance was necessary in order to retain respect from the church and the world. "Guard against a love of pleasure," he cautioned, "a sensual temper, and indulgence of appetite, an excessive desire of sleep or idleness."¹¹¹ To temperance Watts added the addition of zeal: "Be forward and ready to engage in every good work and work, that you may be a pattern and leader of the flock."¹¹² A proper

¹⁰⁹Watts, "Qualities Recommended to the Ministers of St. Paul," *Works*, II, 438.

¹¹⁰Watts, "An Humble Attempt," *Works*, III, 31.

¹¹¹Ibid., p. 38.

¹¹²Ibid.

signify, "grave and sunny, yet pleasant and engaging," Watts felt, involved both conversation and department. He warned against either excessive hours or nervous silence.¹¹³ The purpose of a parlor, Watts held, is to win men, not to alienate them. "Study to make the whole of your evenings and discourses *warm* as *engaging*," he urged, "as my little strategies to love you, and allow them to love religion for your sakes."¹¹⁴ Such department should be only the natural demonstration of a disposition characterized by patience, controlled emotion, gentleness, and forgiveness. Believing "character should be all of one piece," Watts also emphasized that preaching effectiveness is directly dependent upon pastoral character and conduct.

Pastor Preacher. Watts balanced the twin activities of parlor and pulpit. A preacher must remember his pastoral office "of particular watchfulness over the flock of Christ, where he has made you a shepherd and overseer."¹¹⁵ A pastor, however, must also remember that his "business and most employment is to speak of the things of God."¹¹⁶ For did Watts forget the children. "Take the lambs of the flock love you," he exhorted the multi-talented ministry.

In addition, Watts urged that ministers leave the particular "ecclesiastical circumstances of the family"; develop taste and gentleness to remove "that dry and bookish discourse" from the people's attitudes; develop "the happy talent of parlor preaching"; and, to assist in min-

¹¹³ Watts, pp. 28-29.

¹¹⁴ Watts, p. 28.

¹¹⁵ Watts, p. 28.

¹¹⁶ Watts, p. 28.

maintaining personal contact with their congregations, "keep a catalogue of their names, and now and then review them with a pastoral eye and affection."¹¹⁷ In short, Watts declared that "It is the business of each of us, when we are well satisfied in our call to the ministry, to imitate the glorious preacher Charles Jones."¹¹⁸

Theology

The final element by which a preacher's perspective is determined is his theology. Watts followed the pattern of his ministry in an era of theological ferment.¹¹⁹ The widely accepted Thirty-nine Articles were Calvinistic. The Whiggism of Richard Hooker, John Owen, John Howe, Theophilus Gale, Thomas Ridgely, and Matthew Henry, set the main pattern of Puritan thinking.¹²⁰ Calvin "was the chief enemy of Christian vitality, and the most important doctrinal controversy was the Trinitarian."¹²¹ The great Awakening in America was drawing attention in England.¹²² The Wesley-Whitefield revival was challenging the established forms of the Church of England and of the dissenters.¹²³

¹¹⁷Ibid.

¹¹⁸Watts, "A National Foundation," Works, V, 718.

¹¹⁹Watts, History of Dissenters, II, 221.

¹²⁰Baym, History of Dissenters, II, 128-129.

¹²¹Ibid., II, 221, 229.

¹²²Jonathan Edwards, Thoughts on the Revival of Religion in New England, 1740. To which I prefixed a description of the surprising work of God in New-England, Annals, 212 (New York, n.d.), p. 7.

¹²³Alfred Ernest Harris, The Christian Preacher (New York, 1901), pp. 211-212.

Against such a background, what doctrine does Watts believe should be preached? Curtis states Watts represented "the quiet and sober evangelism, which had not yet caught the glow of the Evangelical Revival."¹²⁴ Curtis declares Watts "loved Jesus intensely," and sums up his doctrinal position by saying, "He saw Jesus . . . clinging to the form of Calvinistic dogma but explaining away their harshness."¹²⁵ Since a more complete analysis of his doctrinal position will be made in the chapter dealing with his preaching practice, this statement will for the present be sufficient to clarify Watts's theological viewpoint as a purely evangelical modification of Calvinism.

Conclusion

It was in the light of the beliefs and doctrines described above that Watts viewed the work of preaching and constructed his homiletics. The strength and weakness of his viewpoint were expressions both of eighteenth-century Puritanism and of his own individuality. His view of the social structure was characteristic. Like his fellow dissenters Watts was a loyal Englishman, yet his concept of the separation of church and state was advanced beyond his time. He confined the sphere of government to the secular; that of religion to the spiritual. Herbert E. Rieu and Charles E. Hall, the English church historians, claim that Watts's Essay on Civil Power "was the first formal statement of the principles of religious liberty by a Congregational minister."¹²⁶

¹²⁴ Ibid., p. 122.

¹²⁵ Curtis, Watts, pp. 125, 126.

¹²⁶ Herbert E. Rieu and Charles E. Hall, History of the Free Churches of England, 1557-1851 (London, 1851), pp. 311-312.

They express faith, however, that the "truth would have been realized in his condemnation of Church Establishments by the majority of the ministers of his time."¹²⁷ Again, his warnings about social reorganization was only an example of the philosophy of the wealthy American aristocracy among whom he lived.¹²⁸ Transcendentalism had not responded to social reform.¹²⁹ Contemporary Christianity saw only dimly the missionary implications of the gospel.¹³⁰ Wells accepted these weaknesses only in his poetic insights. His view of human society centered his intense interest in the mind, character, and soul of the individual.

Intellectually, it is apparent that Wells was strongly affected by his environment. Nationalism caused him to know reason and to fear "utilitarianism." Yet his personal view was manifested in giving the Bible the place of final authority and in making "the inward witness" the personal test of religious reality. As a result, logic and emotion were balanced in his preaching appeal. The center of his preaching was the Bible and the end of his preaching was experimental religion.

Wells was, obviously, never strongly sectarian. As Wellsly declared, "Like the Master he served, he took pleasure in the assimilation,

¹²⁷ ~~Wells~~

¹²⁸ ~~Wells~~, *Social Ideas*, p. 104.

¹²⁹ John Fletcher Smith, *History of the Christian Church* (8 vols.; New York, 1908), II, 598-601.

¹³⁰ Kenneth Scott Latourette, "Three Centuries of Missions," *A History of Expansion of Christianity* (8 vols.; New York, 1939), III, 470, 471. See also Vol. I, 44-45.

the usefulness, and the prosperity of others.¹³¹ His charitable spirit sought for unity among Christians. Argumentation was subordinated to explanation and persuasive appeal. Theological conformity, within the limits of a broad orthodox position, was less important than spiritual likeness to Christ. While his theology was a clearly stated Calvinism, the harshness of this doctrine was softened by his charity.¹³²

Watts's viewpoint centered the aim of the ministry in the individual worshipper. The personal rights and powers of individuals controlled his concept of church polity. Praying, catechizing, and preaching were directed to the individual. The ends of preaching centered in the needs of the individual. Each must personally accept the persuasion of gospel preaching. Each must be inspired to scholarly study and actively living.

These were the elements of Watts's viewpoint. By these factors his preaching doctrine was formulated and his practice was controlled.

¹³¹Equally, Watts, *op. cit.*, 126.

¹³²Watts, *ibid.*, p. 105.

give value and proper use of the various branches of study is the task of preaching.

In this investigation Watts recommended three major sources of source material: Biblical, "experimental," and cultural. In the Biblical source he saw the final authority for scripture, doctrine, and ethics. In the "experimental" source he discerned a method for applying Biblical truths to specific needs in individual experience. In the cultural source he found a profitable use for man's entire intellectual heritage in the enrichment of the preacher's ministry. From these three sources Watts believed pastors could obtain material for effective sermons by the aid of genius, industry, and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Biblical

From the beginning Christian preaching has been Biblical.⁴ Christian preachers, though differing in the manner and degree of scriptural usage, have agreed that the Bible is a basic source for source material. Variations in the use are determined by each pastor's view on five problems concerning the Scripture: (1) the scope of the revelation, (2) the degree of its inspiration, (3) the method of its interpretation, (4) the area of its authority, and (5) the basis of its application. Watts expressed his conclusions on each of them.

⁴See, for example, Clarke, Scripture as Source, pp. 145-150.

The Basis of Revelation

Regarding "the Jewish apocryphal writers," Weiss affirmed that "the protestant belief looking for the ground of his faith left the books of the Old and New Testament."¹⁷ Nothing, therefore, not written in these books or "derived thence by such obvious and evident arrangements" was a necessary part of Christian revelation. In this basis, Weiss strongly criticized both the papists for "dangerous additions of men to the gospel of Christ" and the deistic rationalists for "renouncing almost everything that seems both real and divine."¹⁸

While Weiss accepted the entire system of study-as-basis as the Word of God, he assigned greater importance to the New Testament. "Learn your religion from this book," he urged, for it "is more extensively the rule of our holy religion."¹⁹ At the highest plane of revelation, in Weiss's view, was the gospel, which he defined thus:

The gospel of Christ is a gracious constitution of God, for the recovery of sinful men, by sending his son, Jesus, to the flesh, to obey his law, which men had broken, to make a proper atonement for sin by his death, and to procure the favour of God, and eternal happiness, for all that believe and repent, and receive this offered salvation, together with a promise of the Holy Spirit, to work this faith and repentance, in the hearts of men, to remove their sinful nature unto holiness, to draw them off for this happiness, or grace, and to bring them to the full possession of it in heaven.²⁰

¹⁷Weiss, "A National Defense of the Gospel," in "Lectures," *Works*, I, 277.

¹⁸Weiss, "An Noble Attempt," *ibid.*, III, 82-83.

¹⁹Weiss, "A Covenant Against Infidelity," *ibid.*, IV, 26.

²⁰Weiss, "The Substance, or Matter of the Gospel," in "Orthodoxy and Church," *ibid.*, III, 252-254.

believing that no other message, even though enforced by talent, learning and rhetorical skill, could affect salvation, Watts warned his fellow-ministers, "I am fully persuaded you could never penetrate one soul, . . . without this blessed gospel which is committed to your hands."¹² Therefore, he urged them to "preach this gospel with fervidness, and to labour in the sacred work."¹³ To ministers who preached as Hodge-lyke described, "persons . . . little better than miserable moral creeps, utterly devoid of anything to excite, convert, or save souls," Watts urged a return to the focal center of revelation, the content of the gospel.¹⁴

The Nature of Revelation

As a result of this gospel emphasis Watts encountered the problem of the nature of the Bible's inspiration. Secular rationalism denied any special revelation.¹⁵ Watts rejected such skepticism as contrary to reason and the needs of man.¹⁶ The learned Baptist theologian and London pastor, John Gill, held for a strict verbal interpretation.¹⁷ Though Watts declared that the Holy Spirit "inspired [the] divine truths of the

¹²Watts, "An Noble Attempt," *ibid.*, III, 13.

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 36.

¹⁴J. C. Hays, *The Christian Ministry of England in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1921), p. 14.

¹⁵Watts, *History of Christian Testimony*, II, 294.

¹⁶Watts, "Strength and Weakness of Reason," *ibid.*, II, 403.

¹⁷Watts, *History of Christian Testimony*, II, 294.

gospel," he repudiated a primary verbal inspiration. To him, revelation was in the sense rather than in the words of the Bible. Stating that "words are but the shell in which the divine ideas are conveyed to the mind," Wells claimed that "we do not in the least diverge from the letter of the Bible, while we declare, that it is the sense of Scripture, and not the mere words of it, that must be our rule of duty and practice."¹⁷ In this sense, the verbal accuracy of the text of the Bible was not considered of critical importance.¹⁸ Wells's theory of inspiration was dynamic and volitional rather than verbal.

The Method of Interpretation

Wells's belief that revelation was in the "sense" rather than in the exact words influenced his method of interpreting the Scriptures. Interpretation was for him by the individual Christian, conforming to principles of reason, and fidelity to the explicit text in the Bible—these constituted Wells's requirements for a satisfactory method of interpretation.

The reformers had long contended for the right of the individual Christian to interpret the Bible independent of religious councils.¹⁹ Wells emphasized not only this right but the responsibility of "every man to use his Bible, and to judge for himself the sense and meaning of it, using the best helps that he can obtain for this end."²⁰

¹⁷Wells, "National Foundation," *Engle*, 7, 731.

¹⁸Wells, "David Wilson," in "Sermons," *Engle*, 1, 26.

¹⁹Augustine, *History of Heresies*, II, 234.

²⁰Wells, "A National Defense of the Gospel," in "Sermons," *Engle*, 1, 175.

With this individual need in mind, Watts suggested twelve principles especially suited to help one understand "the sense of the sacred writings."⁸¹ He began by advocating an intimate knowledge of the original languages, with special attention to word usage in the period generally, as well as by the particular author.⁸² Knowledge of the nature of the subject, the design of the writer, and the character of the people addressed were considered important in this connection.⁸³ Watts also explained that both the inferences drawn from, and the objections brought against, any writing often assisted in understanding its true meaning.⁸⁴ Saying that "you treat every author, writer, or speaker, just as you yourselves would be willing to be treated by others, viz. are assuming not the meaning of what you write or speak," Watts cautioned against the varying influences of custom in the writer or the reader.⁸⁵ In interpreting Scripture Watts specified two essentials: the aid of the Holy Spirit and the comparison of Scripture with Scripture.⁸⁶ While he admitted diversity in the Bible, he contended "that whoever gets off prejudice, and is purely sincere in his search of the word of God, shall certainly find, through divine assistance, all essential truth."⁸⁷ Here was the key to the meaning of Scripture.

⁸¹Watts, "Improvement of the Mind," *Eight*, 7, 228.

⁸²*Ibid.*, pp. 228-229. ⁸³*Ibid.*, p. 229. ⁸⁴*Ibid.*, p. 229.

⁸⁵*Ibid.* ⁸⁶*Ibid.*, p. 229.

⁸⁷Watts, "A Rational Defense of the Gospel, in 'Dissertions,' *Eight*, 1, 270.

In addition to these principles, Weiss held that a major aid to interpretation was the internal emphasis placed by the Scripture on a particular "doctrine" or "fact." According to his analysis, "importance or necessity to attention" was indicated by strength of evidence, but "usefulness" by frequency of repetition.³² For example, he ruled "that where a doctrine or fact is mentioned but in one single place of the Scripture, it cannot be of absolute necessity to attention."³³ On the basis of this principle, Weiss urged that the individual's faith and the pastor's sermons follow this internal pattern of emphasis set by the Scripture itself.³⁴ Here was the key to the necessity and importance of "doctrines" or "facts."

The Age of Antiscripturism

The early nineteenth-century controversy within Christianity was essentially intellectual.³⁵ It is natural, therefore, that Weiss felt no problem concerning the Bible's authority, except in the conventional areas of doctrine and fact.³⁶ His chief concern in these respects was to limit the requirements of obedience to those contained in the teachings of the New Testament. He cautioned most against adding other applications to those areas where only the Bible should rule.³⁷

³²Weiss, "Orthodoxy and Charity Defined," *Expositor*, III, 701.

³³*Ibid.*, p. 702.

³⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 701-707.

³⁵Salmon, *History of the Christian Church*, pp. 487-493.

³⁶Weiss, "An Bible Attempt," *Expositor*, III, 80.

³⁷*Ibid.*

It should be noted here, though leaving a complete discussion to later chapters, that Weiss also advocated the Bible as an authoritative pattern for logical forms and writing style.³⁴

The Basis of Apologetics

The accepted challenge of rationalism compelled Weiss to find an adequate apologetic for the Bible. "The string-pulling note of rationalism," declares George F. Fisher, "is the rejection of authoritative teaching, the dismissal of experiential revelation."³⁵ In eighteenth-century deism struck powerful blows against the Scriptures. Collins attacked prophecy, Violation the miracles, Hays and Hailbrooke the Old Testament, and Clark the New Testament.³⁶ Weiss had to give his people an answer "when the doubts of our age shall object and say, . . . 'We can the Bible be the word of God?'"³⁷ While he was convinced that sound scholarship vindicated the claims of Scripture, he knew common men could not master learned arguments.³⁸ In weight, therefore, and believed that he had discovered, an apologetic adequate for the ordinary Christian.

³⁴Ibid., pp. 26-27.

³⁵George F. Fisher, Rationalism in History and Theology (New York, 1900), p. 342.

³⁶Thomas, History of Christian Theology, II, 394.

³⁷Thomas, "The Found Witness to Christianity," in "Sermons," Serie, I, 25.

³⁸Ibid., p. 25.

The basis of Weiss's apologetic lay in his conception of the gospel and its effects. First, the nature of the gospel was unique. He likened the gospel to "a seal or signet, of such inflexible and divine purity, that no created power can counterfeit it."⁴⁰ Second, the effect of the gospel was also unique. Weiss believed that when "the spirit of God has stamped this gospel on the soul there are as many holy and happy lines impressed thereby . . . that give certain evidence both of a heavenly signet, and a heavenly operation."⁴¹ Weiss ruled out the possibility that any other religion or doctrine could produce this effect.⁴² The unique internal effect, therefore, became a personal proof of the divine nature of the source. Weiss's logical conclusion followed: "It is thus a convincing, an inflexible witness; such a new and heavenly life wrought in the heart, is a sure proof that the doctrine comes from God."⁴³ Thus, by a process of extension, he applied the same internal witness beyond the gospel to include the Bible as a whole.

And though there are many and sufficient arguments drawn from criticism, history, and human learning, to prove the sacred authority of the Bible, and such as may give abundant evidence to an honest inquirer, and full satisfaction that it is the word of God yet this the chief evidence that the greatest part of Christians use over all others of the divine original of the holy scripture itself, as well as the truth of the doctrines contained in it, viz. that they have found such a holy and heavenly change wrought upon them by reading or hearing the prophecies, the histories, the promises, the precepts, and the thanksgivings of this book, and thence they are led to infer, that the God of truth would not afford a book, which was not agreeable to his mind, with such glorious instances of his own power and grace.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* p. 29.

It is within this context that Butler's advocacy of the Bible as a *scriptural source* must be understood.

First, therefore, while extolling the benefits of all learning, he posited knowledge of the Bible as "the brightest and richest part of the knowledge of a statesman."⁴⁴ Bible study was the first intellectual requirement: "here our faith and conscience may rest safely, in all our disputes about matters of belief or practice."⁴⁵ He equated the "typical doctrine of the insufficiency of the holy scriptures . . . for the good doctrine and action which are necessary to salvation are facts and statements."⁴⁶

Second, persons prepared with scripture had greater effectiveness both to convert the sinner and to instruct the believer. Butler declared:

A preacher whose mind is well stored and enriched with the divine scenes and sentiments, the meaning and the language of scripture, (and especially if these are wrought into his heart by christian experience) supposing his other talents are equal to those of his brethren, will always have a considerable advantage over them in comparing with the common as shall be most popular and most useful in christian assemblies; and he may better expect the blessing of God, to make his word triumph over the souls of men, and still generally speak to their hearts with more power for their eternal salvation.⁴⁷

Butler suggested two sources for the power of scriptural sermons: the Holy Spirit's blessing upon the new words, and the people's prior

⁴⁴Butler, "In Bible Attempt," *Works*, III, 12.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*

⁴⁶Butler, "Learning and Charitable Deeds," *Works*, III, 709.

⁴⁷Butler, "In Bible Attempt," *Works*, III, 27-28.

knowledge of Bible questions.

Always, however, Watts considered the Bible as a means, not an end. He collected his fellow ministers, "in handling the book, divide, explain, illustrate, prove, convince, infer, and apply in such a manner, as to do real service to men, and honour to our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . Let not your chief design be to work up a shock, or to hold out an lamp, but "to save a soul."⁴⁰ Watts's goal was not to impart Bible knowledge, but to effect in a congregation a personal and saving faith in Christ. It was on this basis that he declared to ministers: "our chief business will be to understand this Bible."⁴¹

Experiential⁴²

As Watts saw it, the second major source of preaching material lay in man's religious experience. Three influences contributed to Watts's commendation of "experiential" preaching: the nature of the Christian ministry, the character of Puritan worship, and the emphasis of eighteenth-century philosophy.

Believing that preaching began in the inner experience of the preacher himself, he explained that "the lips of the preacher seem to speak light and life at once, and he helps to communicate the holy passion all around him, by feeling it first himself."⁴³ In like manner,

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 11.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 3.

⁴²"Experiential" is here used in its primary meaning: "drawing to, or based on experience, especially personal experience, as distinct from theory." See Watts, "An Inquiry into the Nature of Preaching," English, III, 19; Illustration, The Modern Preacher, pp. 56-57.

⁴³Watts, "The Description of the Minister," English, II, 174.

be affirmed that preaching must touch the hearer's experience. "The noble principles of the christian faith," he said, "animate all the powers of nature, and seek us first as become the followers and disciples of the holy Jesus."²² Anything less than the sharing of life situations was not truly Christian preaching.

Scriven has declared that this experiential quality "was a distinctive note of Puritan and other forms of English dissent."²³ Watts, too, was conscious of this link with an honored heritage. In extolling the advantages of experiential preaching, he asserted, "Especially this was the fashion and practice of our fathers amongst the puritans and protestant dissenters in their ministry."²⁴

Finally, the emphasis which contemporary philosophy placed on experience influenced Watts's leaning toward the experiential. Recall that Locke claimed that images, impressed upon the mind from external objects, form the basis of all our knowledge.²⁵ Accepting Locke's arguments, Berkeley concluded "that if all the properties attributed to the objects are only in the mind, there can be no object apart from the mind."²⁶ Such a conclusion undercut the emphasis squarely upon the subjective experience of the individual. In this age of epistemological ferment Watts

²²Ibid., p. 875.

²³Scriven, The English Bible, p. 23.

²⁴Watts, "An Noble Attempt," ibid., III, 68.

²⁵Locke, History of Philosophy, p. 371.

²⁶Moore and Hall, History of Free Churches of England, p. 346.

was a participating writer. He can write without the intent of his interest. Stone and Hall judge that "as a moral philosopher he ranked next to Locke."³⁷ They add that White was renowned among his contemporaries as a philosopher.³⁸ In making a writer as John N. Tolson could not ignore White in his discussion of Locke, and conclude that "White followed Berkeley's distinction of substances."³⁹ Without attempting to explain the content of White's philosophy, these facts should be sufficient evidence that eighteenth-century epistemology probably had an effect on his theory of preaching.

Epistemological preaching as a method may be summarized in four imperative statements based on White's own writings.

First, men must be classified on the basis of their religious experience. Explicating "this distinction as great and necessary," White instructed the preaching as follows.

Let your hearers hear that there is a vast and unbridgeable difference betwixt a sinner and a sinner, one is Christ, and one not of Christ; between one whose heart is in a state of enough hatred or ingratitude, and one that is in a state of grace, and renewed to faith and holiness; between one who is only born of the flesh and is a child of wrath, and one who is born again, or born of the Spirit, and is become a child of God, a son of Christ, and an heir of heaven.⁴⁰

Secondly, only two classes were recognized: the sinner and the sinner.⁴¹

³⁷Stone and Hall, *History of Free Churches of England*, p. 384.

³⁸*Ibid.*, p. 404.

³⁹John N. Tolson, *John Locke and the Age of Reason* (Oxford, 1906), p. 404.

⁴⁰White, "An Noble Attempt," *Ibid.*, III, 15.

⁴¹*Ibid.*

Second, these classes must be exhibited on the basis of the individual's internal condition.⁴² Watts advocated "a particular search and supply into souls and consciences" to strengthen spiritual "states and cases."⁴³ He listed these conditions as typical: converted, imbecile, jealous, doubting, tempted, afflicted, desolate, humble, fearful, discontented, unconverted, hypocritical, wavering.⁴⁴

Third, the teachings of the Bible must be divided on the basis of these classifications. Thus from the foundation, he told his fellow-ministers, upon which "you will divide the word of God aright, and give to everyone their portion: 1 Tim. 4, 13."⁴⁵

Fourth, having made this division of men and of the Scriptures, the preacher must seek to compare and deliver his sermons so that the divine spiritual supply is adapted to the individual's need. Watts proclaimed, "I wish with all my soul, this sort of distribution, this manner of dividing the word of God, and giving to each their due, was never given out of fashion in any places of society."⁴⁶ In short, in Watts's view, experimental preaching was distinguished by a spiritual classification of men and Scripture as to most practical needs.

Now, then, did this experimental emphasis become a serious source? The answer is twofold. First by means of it the preacher's objective was relativized. In subject-centered BETHLEHEM preaching, the preacher's purpose was to expound the Scriptural text. Experimental preaching, in

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

colored, and without religious bias prevailing, asserted Welle, was designed "if possible, to reach the hearts of the assembly, and to save the souls of men from being by the insidious influence of the grace of God."⁶⁷ Welle's condition, as well as the scriptures, furnished subject matter for sermons. This restricted program became the guide for focusing the "whole action both as to matter and manner."⁶⁸

Second, Welle's experimental synthesis furnished a new methodological resource. By Welle truth applied to an actual need world, he believed, furnished adequate sermon material. The preacher had a ready-made list of stereotyped spiritual states, derived both from a study of the Bible and from introspection. By focusing on these the sermon text might be richly supplied and creatively applied. Welle urged ministers to follow this method in sermon composition:

In choosing your texts, or themes of discourse, use such as are most suited to do good to souls, according to the present needs, dangers, and circumstances of the people; whether for the instruction of the ignorant; for the conversion of the stupid and careless; for the calling and nurturing of the delicate; for the conversion of the vicious; for the edification of converts; for the comfort of the timorous and weary; for gentle admonition of backsliders, or more severe reproof.⁶⁹

This methodological method, declared Welle, produced preaching "best suited to bring souls around from a state of sin and misery to a state of grace, and abounding toward glory."⁷⁰ It brought conviction to the hearers by revealing in specific language their exact spiritual needs and supplies.

⁶⁷ Welle

⁶⁸ Welle

⁶⁹ Welle, p. 11.

⁷⁰ Welle, p. 12.

Cultural

The third major concern across Watts' recommendations was a broad general culture. While there were exceptions--such as John Gill and Matthew Henry, the celebrated Bible commentators--as a general rule, those who presided in diocesan chapels were not men of much learning. Watts deplored this condition. Indeed, he resided divinely with law and medicine as a learned profession.⁷¹ He suggested, therefore, a broad program of study "as necessary to furnish the mind with knowledge for the office of the ministry."⁷² "Though [these studies] are learned in the academy," he reasoned, "yet I can by no means think it proper they should be left there and forgotten."⁷³ In An Academic Attempt, and also in The Improvement of the Mind Watts undertook to explain why he advocated this program of study, as well as to point out its benefits in the preparation and delivery of sermons.⁷⁴ While he recommended that study be continued "even through the whole course of life," he also cautioned that "a minister should remember, that himself, with all his studies, is consecrated to the service of the sanctuary."⁷⁵

⁷¹Watts, "The Improvement of the Mind," Watts, V, 301.

⁷²Watts, "An Academic Attempt," Watts, III, 6.

⁷³Watts, p. 21.

⁷⁴Watts, pp. 8-12. See also Watts, V, 301-302, 302-303. Cf. John Newton, "A Plan of Academic Preparation for the Ministry in a Letter to a Friend," The Works of Rev. John Newton (3 vols.; New York, 1800), V, 52.

⁷⁵Watts, pp. 10-11.

Study Program

Vatta recognized six pressing requirements, and suggested specific studies to supply each of these needs:

1. To improve the reasoning faculty, logic and mathematics.
2. To trace and evaluate the work of God in his creations, physical philosophy and human nature.
3. To improve skill in the techniques of serious composition and delivery, "sermon" and oratory.
4. To prove the divine nature of Christianity, the theory and practices of natural religion.
5. To understand the Bible, philology, geography, and history.
6. To cultivate preaching, sciences, and the various branches of polite learning.²¹

To assist the student in his personal program of continued education, Vatta suggested sixteen principles by which "linguists and study" might properly be applied to any discipline: judge upon nothing less than the best evidence available; distinguish between words and things; do not overstep antecedent learning; approach the difficult gradually; understand each step before taking the next more advanced one; limit the number of studies; keep the active course in view; exert effort in proportion to a writer's importance; beware of pre-conceptions; do not belittle disciplines of which you have nothing; draw up a schedule; do not over fatigue the mind; seek true knowledge rather than early

²¹ ibid. p. 9.

manus; do not expect certainty in every subject; apply speculative studies to practical every outcome in occasional and general articles of study.⁷⁷

Benefit

Watts pronounced definite judgments concerning the benefits to be derived from each area of study.

To Improve the Reasoning Faculty. Watts believed that the study of mathematics and logic tended "to fix a reasoning mind, to keep a habit of attention, not to improve the faculty of reason."⁷⁸ He quoted Dr. George Heyne's assertion that mathematics "quickens and sharpens the reasoning faculty."⁷⁹ In the other hand, Watts cautioned that "launching into the depths of these studies . . . is apt to breed a secret and refined pride . . . the most opposite temper to the true spirit of the gospel."⁸⁰

Watts's commendation of logic was equally strong, but here his caution concerned the nature rather than the use of the discipline. He repudiated that sort of logic which is only a scholastic "art of reasoning," in which "an infinite heap of trifles and importunances have been intermingled."⁸¹ True logic, Watts defined as "the art of using human will in our inquiries after truth, and the communication of it to others."⁸²

⁷⁷Watts, "The Improvement of the Mind," Enquiry, V, 375-382.

⁷⁸Enquiry, p. 375. ⁷⁹Enquiry, p. 378.

⁸⁰Enquiry, pp. 375-378. ⁸¹Enquiry, p. 375.

⁸²Watts, "Logic," Enquiry, V, 7.

By such a definition he reflected the scope ordinarily assigned to logic in his day. The study, he thought, improved perception, judgment, reasoning, and disposition, and assisted specifically in serious composition. For completely Watts considered this discipline as aid to religion not to be excluded from his claim that "one great part of the design of Logic is to guard us against the delusive Influences of our weaker powers, to cure the mistakes of immature judgment, and to raise us in some measure from the rules of our Fall."⁸¹ To Watts, the study of logic assisted the pastor to preach and the hearers to evaluate spiritual truth.

To James Smith's Work. The second category of profane studies advocated by Watts as especially useful for the preacher was natural sciences. In this area, however, he set little value in "the old Aristotelian science."⁸² The works of contemporary scholars--"especially those who have followed the principles of the master of our age and nation, Sir Isaac Newton"--were, Watts believed, the most profitable for the preacher.⁸³ The findings of science, Watts declared, give the preacher "a wider and more delightful view of the works of God," and in particular, "furnish him with lively and happy images and metaphors drawn from the large volume of nature, to display and represent the things of God in the most beautiful and affecting manner."⁸⁴

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 6.

⁸² Ibid., "The Improvement of the Mind," ibid., p. 104.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

As for the sciences of human nature, Veltje declared that "the knowledge . . . of animal nature and of the rational soul of man, and the mutual influence of these two ingredients of our composition upon each other, is worthy the study of a divine."¹⁷ On the one hand, it gave the pastor an understanding of the drives, motivations, and reactions that influenced his hearers. On the other, it distinguished genuine from spurious religious "demonstrations."¹⁸ Thus, knowledge of physical science and human nature, Veltje believed, assisted the preacher in tracking, depicting, and evaluating the works of God both in the world and in the individual.

In *Human Preaching Skills*, The third division of secular studies advocated by Veltje was directly concerned with preaching as an act of communication. It included "method" and rhetoric.

By "method" Veltje meant the usable sub-product of ontology. Ontology, in Veltje's view, was true metaphysics. By ontological procedures one was able to classify being, properties, action, and activities, as their relations, differences, and distinctions might be discovered. This science, therefore, furnished the basis for "the disposition of everything into its proper rank and class of beings, attributes, and actions."¹⁹ As such, it lay at the basis of the practical science of "method."²⁰ In preaching, however, method went way from the strict ontological, scientific order as an "to range our thoughts

¹⁷ ibid., p. 27.

¹⁸ ibid.

¹⁹ ibid., p. 30.

²⁰ ibid.

and dissonance in the color, and to set the things of God before man in the plainest, the most conspicuous and convincing light.⁴²

By "rhetory," Watts referred to rhetoric in practice. He gave several definitions of rhetoric. All indicated that his emphasis was Ciceronian rather than Aristotelian. In An Noble Attempt he referred to rhetoric as "the happy skill of persuasion."⁴³ In his Logic he defined it as "the art of speaking in a manner fit to persuade."⁴⁴ In The Improvement of the Mind he expanded his reference to "the art of persuading" by explaining that this is accomplished by convincing the mind, moving the will, and raising the passions.

The rhetoric, in general, is the art of persuading, which may be distinguished into three parts, viz. 1. Conveying the sense of the speaker to the understanding of the hearer in the clearest and most intelligible manner, by the plainest expressions and the most lively and striking representations of th. 2. Persuading the will affectionally to choose or refuse the thing suggested and represented. 3. Raising the passions in the most virtuous and forcible manner, or so to set all the soul and power of nature on work to pursue or avoid the thing in debate.⁴⁵

By this clear statement Watts explained the fact that he distinguished, as did the faculty psychologists, among the understanding, the will, and the passions. To each of these faculties a part of the message was to be directed. However, he believed the appeal must be made in set orders: first, the understanding was to be convinced by reason; second,

⁴²Watts, "An Noble Attempt," Logic, III, 9.

⁴³Logic, p. 10.

⁴⁴Watts, "Logic," Logic, I, 62.

⁴⁵Watts, "The Improvement of the Mind," Logic, I, 112.

and only in this order, was the emotional arousal of the passions to be undertaken.²⁵

At times Watts was severely critical of rhetoric. He had advised Plato that he should:

Not to give a full and direct answer to the force of the foregoing objection, I would lay down three considerations, which may help to remove those glaring eyes of rhetoric that diffuse themselves round the argument, impose upon, and amuse weaker minds, and prevent them from touching the question in the true light, which, if ever one [is] the proper man, would be attended with much ease.²⁶

Again, he spoke of "a flourish of wit to teach us to undervalue our reason, a new rank of rhetoric, in hypothesis of respect to our understanding."²⁷ In another occasion, he said, "Perpetual rhetoric of the eloquent kind may at last force the conscience of a sinner perhaps to initiate pity, for the sake of his own peace; but it can never teach him what to practice the tender passion."²⁸ Specifically he concluded:

. . . whoever pleading in any British courts of justice, before a judicial judge, should think of any other aid than rhetoric, than that which teaches to open a cause clearly, and spread it in the most perspicuous, complete, and impartial manner before the eyes of him that judges; for impartial justice being the thing which is sought, there should be no artifice used, no eloquence or power of language employed to persuade the jury, or work upon the

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

²⁶ Watts, "National Foundation," *ibid.*, 7, 123.

²⁷ Watts, "Dissuade of Time Employed, in Prose and Verse," in "The Treasury of All the Religious Which God Ever Spoke of," *ibid.*, 17, 591.

²⁸ Watts, "Maximous Thoughts," in "Religious Sentences," *ibid.*, 17, 361.

passions, lest the decisive sentences of the judge should be blunted or warped into injustice. For this reason, Mr. Locke would banish all passions in the law. For this, not of the government of Carolina, in his posthumous writing through perhaps that great man might possibly be too severe in so universal a sentence of the profession.¹⁰⁰

In the area of preaching, however, Watts defended the use of rhetoric. The nature of the audience, the value of the subject matter, the importance of the spiritual and moral issues--these required "that all the eloquence which a preacher is master of should be employed."¹⁰¹ Watts prayed, "O may each glorious warrior of sacred oratory never be wanting in the pulpits of Great Britain!"¹⁰² It was in the fulcrum of this conviction and with the resources of this prayer that Watts formulated his theory for effective evangelical preaching.

On True Christianity Preleg. Watts's fourth division was the comparative study of natural and revealed religion. He divided natural religion into two areas corresponding approximately to "theoretical" and "practical." The first, called "speculative or contemplative," dealt with "the knowledge of God in his various perfections, and in his relations to his rational creatures, so far as may be known by the light of nature."¹⁰³ The second, called "practical," or moral philosophy, dealt with "the knowledge of the several duties that arise from our relations to God, and our relation to our fellow-creatures, and our proper subordination and government of ourselves."¹⁰⁴ Watts contended that no religion

¹⁰⁰Watts, "The Improvement of the Mind," ibid., 7, 143.

¹⁰¹ibid., 7, 143.

¹⁰²ibid.

¹⁰³ibid., 7, 143.

¹⁰⁴ibid.

could dispense with the twin obligations of worship and morality based upon these universal elements. His criticism of natural religion, therefore, lay not in its falsity but in its inadequacy. He declared his belief in the truth of natural religion by stating that "the whole of natural religion is contained and included in the gospel of Christ."¹⁰⁴ At the same time, he asserted the belief that "reason is far from being sufficient in any practical sense . . . to lead to virtue, religion, and happiness."¹⁰⁵ As for other religions, none of them, he said, "can compare with the doctrine of the New Testament, either for its own internal excellency, or the external proofs that it came from God."¹⁰⁶ Because constructed from this source, Verbe's claims, would prove Christianity divine.¹⁰⁷

To Understand the Bible. The fifth category of studies in Verbe's suggested plan for ministers dealt directly with aids to Bible study. These included "some skill in the tongue; and particularly those which in the Scriptures were written, viz. Hebrew and Greek; some knowledge of the customs of the ancients, [and] some acquaintance with geography and chronology."¹⁰⁸

The importance of Latin, Verbe recognized only grudgingly. The

¹⁰⁴Verbe, "An Noble Attempt," Verbe, III, 18.

¹⁰⁵Verbe, "Futility and Weakness," Verbe, II, 167.

¹⁰⁶Verbe,
Verbe.

¹⁰⁷Verbe, "An Noble Attempt," Verbe, III, 18.

¹⁰⁸Verbe, p. 7.

almost universal one it had formerly enjoyed be continued as "owing to the craft and policy of the priesthood and church of Rome,"¹⁰⁹ Begging the Blessed God and the British Parliament that "we were delivered from saying our prayers in Latin, from being bound to read the word of God in a tongue unknown to the people."¹¹⁰ Yet, in February Watts admitted that "such an intent the study of theology should be well regulated . . . with Latin, because it has been for many hundred years the language of the schools of learning."¹¹¹

With no such reserve Watts declared that the ministry "requires some knowledge of those original languages, Greek and Hebrew, in which the Scriptures were written." For Hebrew this might be limited to the ability "to find out the sense of a text by the help of a dictionary."¹¹² Not in the case of Greek, Watts urged "a pretty good knowledge . . . since all the important points of the Christian religion are derived from the New Testament."¹¹³ Likewise, he believed, should also master Syriac, Arabic, and Chaldee. Not in the case of the average minister, he frankly asked, "And after all, since none of these assistances can yield us a sufficient proof of a true interpretation, and give us the certain sense of a text, who would be persuaded to waste any great number of his better hours in such dry studies, and in labours of an infinite nature?"¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁹ Watts, "The Improvement of the West," Journal, V, 307.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 303.

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 306.

¹¹² Ibid., p. 308.

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 311.

In addition to his knowledge of the Bible, Watts recommended the study of history and geography. Such studies "were as necessary to divines as to gentlemen of any profession, for such knowledge enabled them to remove difficulties in the Scriptures and also demonstrated a divine providence."¹¹⁴ Watts ranked as even more useful, in their instructional insights, the "smaller histories, biography, or the annals of great and good men."¹¹⁵

On Ecclesiastical Preparation. The final category in Watts's proposed program of studies for his minister, dealt with "such sort of accomplishments as the mind as will embellish the character of a minister, and render his person and his labors more acceptable to the world."¹¹⁶ These included, first, a further study of the sciences, and second, belles lettres. Among the sciences he chose to advocate, but without explanatory comment, "have further acquaintance with natural geography, the nature and situation of this world; some general view of astronomy."¹¹⁷ Concerning secular philological studies, he declared their chief value was cultural. Watts did specify, however, that reading good literature enriched style, while studying literary criticism improved interpretative judgment.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴Watts, ibid., p. 305.

¹¹⁵Watts, ibid.

¹¹⁶Watts, "An Ecclesiastical Account," Watts, III, 18.

¹¹⁷Watts, ibid.

¹¹⁸Watts, "The Improvement of the Mind," Watts, I, 303-304.

Conclusions

Votta's emphasis on the Bible and experience, and on a specific list of sermon studies does not mean that he would exclude other sorts of preaching material. As the earlier George Herbert had said, "It is no ill mean that refresh any vision: and there is no knowledge, but, in a skillful hand, serves either positively as it is, or else to illustrate some other knowledge."¹²⁰ Votta welcomed all truth. At the same time, he recommended a consistent purpose in the choice of sermon materials.

First, he told the Bible to be a transcendent instrument of truth available to the preacher. Contemporary criticisms, threatening to level the Bible to the plane of mere literature, only stimulated his faith. Charles Gorenson Capod, in a recent description of an ideal preacher, could have been referring to Votta when he said, "To him the Bible is transcendent literature just because it is mere. It could not otherwise be the Bible, distinguished by its intrinsic spiritual authority from all other books."¹²¹ Votta, however, was not a Bible worshiper. He preached the Bible because he believed in its content and in the power of that content to do what no other message could. The gospel was not vindicated by being in the Bible, but the Bible was vindicated by the content of its message. Votta accepted and preached the Bible

¹²⁰George Herbert, "A Poet to the People," The Clergyman's Handbook (Detroit, 1871), p. 60.

¹²¹Charles Gorenson Capod, Preaching as a Means of Grace (Peabody, 1941), p. 1.

not an end in itself, but an instrument to effect salvation and righteous living.

Second, Weiss's preaching theory stressed the importance of personal Christian experience. In his view, life and the Bible were not divorced. It was in terms of living needs that the Bible must be interpreted. Thus life acted upon the Bible, but even more fundamental, the Bible interpreted the real life of people. The self-knowledge of the congregation and the insight of the preacher were augmented by the Bible's penetrating analysis of the states of the soul. Moreover, the Bible offered a remedy for every man. It enabled the preacher to speak to each soul on its own level, and thus to meet the varying needs of individuals.

Third, the preacher's personal studies were viewed as aids to his central purpose. The deepening of his own insights, the enrichment of his knowledge, the increase of his skills, the enlargement of his powers--Weiss evaluated all of these as they enabled him to reach men effectively with the gospel. The Bible was the transcendent instrument, but these were important aids. In Weiss, all science and knowledge, the writings of thinkers and holy men, were vital extensions of the preacher's limited personal experience. Weiss accepted them all. Only when they were derived from this total enrichment could someone effectively express the breadth, depth, length, and height of the revelation of God's redeeming love and abounding grace. All knowledge, therefore, converged in this central common purpose of making felt the vital saving reality in the individual's life.

CHAPTER IV

MEMORY: THE STOREHOUSE OF THE MIND

Hobbes, unlike most modern rationalists, made memory a distinct element in his hedolistic. Concerning the preserving of notions he said, "Can you make the utter word where it will not stick? Where all the discourse vanishes from the remembrance, can you suppose the soul to be profited or assisted?"¹

But Hobbes went even further than this. In his opinion all phases of the pastor's work were dependent on memory. As he himself said, "There can be neither knowledge, nor art, nor science without memory. nor can there be any improvement of mankind in virtue and morals, or the practice of religion without the assistance of this power."²

The Nature of Memory

"Memory," asserted Hobbes, "is a distinct faculty of the mind of man, very different from perception, judgment and reasoning, and its other powers."³ It is "our natural power of retaining what we learn, and of recalling it on every occasion."⁴ As not of memory, Hobbes said, occurs "when the same ideas or perceptions which we had before are again excited in the soul, without the presence of the same object, or the same occasion, . . . supposing that we have a remembrance that we had

¹Hobbes, "The Improvement of the Mind," *ibid.*, 7, 349.

²*Ibid.*, p. 275.

³*Ibid.*, p. 275.

⁴*Ibid.*

this perception or this idea before."⁵

Memory Related to the Faculties

In Welle's view, memory serves the subject matter from the facilities of perception, reflection, and abstraction. If "ideas are varied, enlarged, diminished, multiplied, or joined and mingled in fresh different from . . . our first perceptions of them," they are the products of imagination rather than memory.⁶ These are "ideas" say themselves, however, become additional subject matter for reflection. Consequently, imagination as well as perception, reflection, and abstraction contribute to memory.

On the other hand, these faculties are dependent upon memory. In a vivid phrase Welle declared that "without memory the soul of man would be but a poor, distended [sic], naked being, with an everlasting blank spread over it, except in fleeting ideas of the present moment."⁷ "All other abilities of the soul," he said, "borrow from [memory] their beauty and perfection. For the other capacities of the soul are almost useless without this."⁸

⁵Welle, "Philosophical Essays," *Opus*, V, 395. In his definition, it should be noted, Welle paralleled Locke who declared that memory was the faculty of reflection, the "storehouse of new ideas," and the revival of "perceptions which [the mind] has once had, with this additional perception annexed to them, that it had them before." Locke, "An Essay Concerning Human Understanding," *The English Philosophers from Bacon to Mill*, p. 274.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Welle, "The Improvement of the Mind," *Opus*, V, 275.

⁸Ibid., pp. 274-275. On this point also Welle agreed with Locke who said, "Memory, in an intellectual creature, is necessary in the most

In what Watts epigrammatically termed "some loose and unconnected thoughts and remarks with regard to the different powers of wit, memory, and judgment," he described how memory was related to the other faculties.⁹ In this connection, he cautioned against two dangerous tendencies. On the one hand, persons of bright genius, "having riches of their wit," depend upon their invention to the neglect of the power of memory and the loss of the improvements on the other, persons of large memory, by over-dependence on this still storehouse, "neg[lect] present, restrain, and occupy the invention itself."¹⁰ Watts held that genius and memory in proper balance "make a wealthy and happy mind."¹¹

Though admitting that "a good judgment, and a good memory are different qualifications," Watts claimed that "where a happy memory is found in any person, there is a good foundation laid for a wise and just judgment of things."¹² True propositions, the very core of common-sensibilities, result from the action of sound judgment upon the mind's storehouse in order to determine "that such and such things are to be joined or disjointed, to be affirmed or denied."¹³

Watts summarized his view of memory's relations with the other faculties and of its unique value by saying, "It is memory alone that enriches the mind, by preserving what our labors and industry daily collect."¹⁴

memory to perception. It is of as great account, that where it is weak- ing all the rest of our faculties are in a great measure inactive." Locke, "An Essay Concerning Human Understanding," *The English Philosophers from Bacon to Mill*, pp. 276-277.

⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 277-280.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 276-277.

¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 277.

¹²*Ibid.*, p. 277.

¹³*Ibid.*

¹⁴*Ibid.*

The Physiological Basis of Memory

Important aspects of White's treatment of memory were derived from his speculations concerning the physiological basis. His active curiosity in this direction was stimulated by an intense interest in Locke's Essay Concerning Human Understanding. To order his own thinking and to answer certain theological problems implicit in Locke's work, White wrote twelve philosophical essays.¹⁵ Among other matters, he explained in these his theory of the physiological basis of memory.

In order to follow his reasoning, it must be understood that White's basic philosophy was Cartesian dualism.¹⁶ He is considered as a thinking soul and a physical body interacting with each other.¹⁷ The soul, believed White, was always active, always thinking.¹⁸ The body was constantly receiving sensations.¹⁹ White found a relation for soul-body dualism not in philosophy, but in theology. In his view, God

¹⁵White, "Philosophical Essays," Exhib. V. These essays are titled "A Fair Inquiry and Debate Concerning Space, Whether I be Thinking or Not, and a Creature"; "Of Substance and of Solid Extension and a Thinking Power, as the Two Only Original Substances"; "Of the Original of Our Perceptions and Ideas"; "Of Inside Ideas"; "An Inquiry Whether the Soul Thinks Always"; "Of the Power of Spirits to have Bodies; of their being in a Place, and Removing from it"; "The Separating Soul"; "The Separation of the Same Body"; "Of the Production, Generation, and Operations of Plants and Animals"; "Of our-Selves and other-Selves"; "On Some Philosophical Subjects"; "Remarks on some Chapters of Mr. Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding."

¹⁶Leslie Stephen, History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century [2 vols.] New York, 1901, II, 365.

¹⁷White, Philosophical Inquiry, p. 300.

¹⁸White, "Philosophical Essays," Exhib. V, 365.

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 330-332.

had realized (1) that bodily nervous connections should have spiritual counterparts, and (2) that spiritual activities should excite bodily responses.²⁰ Since the body's narrowest vessel, either one is the brain, Valla reasoned that this organ must be the "palace of the soul."²¹ Indeed, he specifically declared, "The soul of man may be said to be in his brain."²²

Operating in the context of this philosophy, Valla asserted that "imagination" and "cognition" result in "images" in the brain.²³ Although these images have no necessary physical likeness to their origin, by being stimulated, apart from the presence of the original stimulus, they revive former sensations and reflections in the soul.²⁴ Such revival was memory.²⁵

Concerning this physical basis of memory Valla raised three important questions. First, he asked, at what age is memory most efficient? Believing "that the goodness of the memory depends in a great degree upon the coolness and temperature of that part of the brain, which is appointed to assist the exercise of all our sensible and intellectual faculties," he found a specific relationship between memory and age.²⁶ He ruled against childhood because "the brain is too soft," and against old age because "the brain is grown too hard." The age favored

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 313.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 313.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 313-314. ²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 313.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 313-314.

²⁶ Valla, "The Improvement of the Mind," *ibid.*, v, 273.

was "intuitively."⁴⁷

Second, he asked, what affects the strength of a memory? By studying the memory of dreams, he concluded that indistinctness or a lack of strength or nature of memory represented material memory.⁴⁸ As we shall see, his positive rules for improving memory reflected this conclusion.

Third, he asked, what creates memory? His answer was that memory might be stimulated by writings, by words or other sensations, and, obviously most important to the present, by words.⁴⁹ Images "ideas are quickly attached to some words," when those words are heard, "the soul has these intellectual ideas which are attached to them, repeated or raised afresh, and they become actually present in the mind."⁵⁰ He summarized this important principle as follows:

For though our intellectual ideas themselves cannot be traced, nor drawn, nor painted on the brain, and consequently nor have we similar impressions made there, yet they may be closely connected or attached by custom to certain corporeal notions, figures, sounds, or letters, which may be excited or delineated there; which traces or notions were first raised by the reading or hearing words written or spoken, which were designed to signify those incorporeal ideas or objects.⁵¹

Here, he declared, was a great potential power for good, but also potential for evil, since words could arouse memories of both virtues and sinful acts.⁵²

⁴⁷¹⁶⁰² Ibid. Cf. as a matter of interest, Thomas Wilson, Appt. of Rhetorique (1555), ed. G. B. Hall (London, 1909), pp. 109-111.

⁴⁸¹⁶⁰² Ibid., "Philosophical Rhetoric," Book, I, 371.

⁴⁹¹⁶⁰² Ibid., p. 375. ⁵⁰¹⁶⁰² Ibid. ⁵¹¹⁶⁰² Ibid.

⁵²¹⁶⁰² Ibid., "An Artistic Approach," Book, III, 34.

Money Related to Religion

Beyond the matter of providing, Vetter laid strong emphasis on money's service to religion as a whole. Only, he thought, by the engagement of money through such means as contributions and pious social religion be engaged in life. To while it is true that Vetter defined money clearly and related its activities with those of the other families, his interest in it was basically functional.

The Importance of Money's Service

Importance was a key word in Vetter's strategy. In a poem for children, he wrote the following:

How dear the little bag be
 Supers each shining hour,
 And gather honey all the day
 From every up-spring flower!

 In books, or works, or beautiful play,
 Let my first years be past;
 That I may give for every day
 Some good account at last. 31

These simple verses explain why it was impossible for Vetter to leave money in the area of religion. His entire philosophy of life impelled him to make a practical application of money to the service of God. For this reason he proposed a standard for a good money and formulated rules for its attainment.

The Standard of Good Money

To meet Vetter's standard, a money must have ease of impression,

³¹Vetter, "Honey Song . . . for Children," *ibid.*, 37, 38.

breadth of capacity, strength of retention, and rapidity of recall.

In detailed these qualifications in the following words:

1. It is ready to receive and admit with great ease, the various ideas both of words and things which are learned or taught.

2. It is large and capacious to treasure up those ideas in great number and variety.

3. It is strong and durable to retain for a considerable time those words or thoughts which are committed to it.

4. It is faithful and active to suggest and recollect upon every proper occasion, all those words or thoughts which have been committed to its care, or treasured up in it.²⁴

Wells explained that each of these elements in memory might be improved as well as improved.²⁵

Rules for Improving Memory

In addition to the general principles of memory he over-creating exercises of memory's power, Wells formulated ten rules for the improvement of this faculty. Like many of his ideas, these rules were derived rather than original. The sources included both classical and contemporary authors. Aeschylus, Valerius Maximus, Cicero, Lilly, Erasmus, Locke, Richard Drey, and Solomon Ives.²⁶

Wells's rules may be divided into two groups. First were five psychological principles: focused attention, clear and distinct apprehension, methodical organization of material, adequate repetition,

²⁴Wells, "The Improvement of the Mind," *Psych*, V, 373.

²⁵*Ibid.*

²⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 373-377. See also Locke, "An Essay Concerning Human Understanding," *British Philosophers*, from 1690 to 1711, 2: 2.

and pleasurable reaction. Second, he listed five more or less mechanical methods: visualization, word association, page localization, special marking, and word building.

The first of the psychological principles recommended focused attention for depth of impression. Here Watts criticized, on the one hand, "the slothful and the negligent" who relied themselves of the "structure of their memory," and, on the other, the "active spirits, who are ever gliding over the surface of things with a restless tempo."³⁷ A lack of focused attention, Watts warned, "will fix nothing in the mind."³⁸ "There must," he said, "be the labor and diligence of close attention to particular subjects of thought and enquiry." Only this "can impress what we read or think upon the remembering faculty in man."³⁹

Convinced that the strength of impression depended on the degree of attention given a subject, Watts devoted an entire chapter to the problem of fixing the attention. Here he detailed seven specific instructions.

1. Get a good liking to the study or knowledge you would pursue.
2. Sometimes . . . my mind runs off several things and several images for the illustration of those notions which are most abstracted and intellectual.
3. Apply yourself to those studies, and read those authors who draw out their subjects in a perpetual chain of connected reasonings, wherein the following parts of

³⁷Watts, "The Improvement of the Mind," *ibid.*, 7, 180.

³⁸*Ibid.*

³⁹*Ibid.*

the *Discourses* are naturally and easily derived from those which go before.

4. Do not choose your constant place of study by the finery of the prospect, or the most various and entertaining scenes of sensible things.

5. Be not in too much haste to come to the determination of a difficult or important point. Think it worth your waiting to find out truth.

6. Have a care of indulging the more sensual passions and appetites of animal nature. They are great enemies to attention.

7. It is therefore very useful to fix and engage the mind of youth and knowledge, by a sense of our duty to God, by a delight in the exercise of our intellectual faculties, by the hope of future service to our fellow creatures, and glorious advantage to ourselves, both in this world and that which is to come.⁴²

Harris's second rule emphasized a "clear and distinct apprehension." He warned that "Faint, glimmering and confused ideas will vanish like images seen in twilight."⁴³ Plain expressions, the removal of ambiguity, emphasis upon words rather than words worn, he said, meant of making ideas clear and distinct.

Harris's third rule concerned the clear and proper disposition of materials. "As much as systematical learning is desired," Harris asserted, "it is certainly the happiest way to furnish the mind with a variety of knowledge."⁴⁴ For illustrations of effective organization he referred to the arrangement of sentences in the orationary's shop and to the genealogical order of a family tree. Applying the general principle that "method" aids memory, Harris positively asserted that "it would be of great advantage, both to the speaker and hearer, to have

⁴² *Disc.*, IV, 216-217.

⁴³ *Disc.*, I, 370.

⁴⁴ *Disc.*, I, 371.

discusses for the pupil's next task a plan and map method.⁴³

The fourth rule was based upon the values of pre-rere and repetition. Wells advocated a preliminary examination of the material, combined with a thoughtful review. In characteristic style, he presented this example and the application.

. . . Thomas even from his youth to his old age, never read a book without making some small points, dashes, or marks in the margin, to mark what parts of the discourse were proper for a review. And when he came to the end of a section or chapter, he slept about his book, and recollected all the sentiments or expressions he had marked, so that he could give a tolerable analysis and abstract of every treatise he had read, just after he had finished it. Thence he became as well furnished with a rich variety of knowledge.

Even when a person is hearing a sermon or a lecture, he may give his thoughts leave now and then to stop back as far as to recollect the several heads of it from the beginning, two or three times before the lecture or sermon is finished.⁴⁴

In addition to pre-rere and review, Wells suggested the drawing up of "brief compends." For this purpose he considered shorthand of great value. However, he warned against plunging into such directing activity immediately after study. Instead, one should, on the first proper opportunity, take even with others the material to be reviewed.⁴⁵

In his fifth rule, Wells suggested that the learning process be made pleasurable.⁴⁶ Wells's prescription was in the spirit of progressive education when he directed: "Whosoever therefore so desires that a child should resort to his money, make it as pleasant to him as

⁴³ ibid.

⁴⁴ ibid.

⁴⁵ ibid.

⁴⁶ ibid., p. 273.

possible . . . search his genius and his tongue . . . let his tale be the instructions you give him, or the lessons you suggest him, in a way suited to his natural inclinations.³⁷ An additional note to pleasure in learning is suggested the use of visual aids and instruction "in a way of sport and play."³⁸

In passing to the sixth rule, Watts left the content of psychological principles to enter that of mechanical devices and aids.

The sixth rule dealt with the relationship between verification and memory. Watts firmly believed that rhyme and rhythm enabled learners to "receive with more ease the things proposed to their observation, and preserve them longer in their remembrance." For this contribution he found support not only in long-established practice but also in such commonplace fables as,

Thirty days have September,
June, and April, and November
February twenty-eight alone,
And all the rest have thirty-one.³⁹

The seventh rule related to word association. Once Watts argued that "when you would remember new things or words, endeavor to associate and connect them with some words or things which you have well known before."⁴⁰ Illustrating this procedure by reference to classical practices, Watts suggested such methods as grouping, relating words to circumstances, representing ideas visually to the mind, or considering as opposites.

³⁷ 212.

³⁸ 212, p. 275.

³⁹ 212.

⁴⁰ 212, p. 275.

In the eighth rule Watts suggested "a local memory."³¹ He immediately clarified this vague phrase by explaining that he referred to a visual memory of where the material to be remembered was located on the page.

The ninth rule related to such visual techniques as varying the size, type, and color of writing, presenting material in short form, and the use of visual aids.³²

The tenth rule was actually a series of current systems of mnemonics. It included such tricks as taking the first letter of a series of words and forming a new word, grouping separate words into a longer word, and similar artificial devices.³³

In these ten rules Watts believed he had collected and demonstrated useful procedures for "improving" the memory. Obviously, they varied widely, ranging from general psychological principles to artificial tricks and devices.

Memory and Preaching

Throughout all of his writings on memory Watts continually related it to the problem of preaching. His examples, allusions, and exhortations frequently dealt with sermons. To him, memory was more than a means of rhetoric. It was an essential instrument in achieving both the immediate and the ultimate purposes of preaching.

Specifically, Watts believed that the basic psychological requirements of retention must direct the preacher in the preparation

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid., pp. 875-876.

³³Ibid., pp. 876-877.

and delivery of sermons. To depart from the course they prescribed would mean the loss of full effectiveness. It is recommended to the preacher these six important principles:

1. Depth of impression necessitates focused attention in study.⁵⁶
2. Brevity of sermon requires clear propositions.⁵⁷
3. Ease of retention is aided by an orderly method of presentation.⁵⁸
4. Ease of recall is founded upon summary and review.⁵⁹
5. Clarity of expression demands a simple, plain style.⁶⁰
6. Readiness of reception necessitates an effective delivery.⁶¹

Attention, disposition, style delivery--these placed all three areas at the service of sermons. It is believed that if a sermon could not be remembered, it had not been properly prepared or presented.⁶² If persuasion were to result, the requirements of memory ought to met.

Such studiousness was not mental slavery, but a wise use of language and principles of the mind. The results, he affirmed, held distinct benefits for preacher and congregation alike. He pointed to the vigor and freshness of the preacher's delivery when his sermon is "brought into head and heart by meditation." Again, he collected the preacher's inward satisfaction in meeting his congregation's actual needs: breaking "the bond of life into places to feed the children."

⁵⁶214. pp. 252-253.

⁵⁷214. pp. 277-278.

⁵⁸214. p. 281.

⁵⁹214. p. 282.

⁶⁰214. p. 283.

⁶¹214.

⁶²214. pp. 283-284.

with it") giving "the ignorant a plain scheme of my own doctrine, and enabling them to understand or retain it."⁴⁸ A preacher, he believed, lost "this regard when he failed to lead money's demands. Such a man is criticized as "effluent my concern . . . to furnish the money with my lasting treasure, or to make a moving and a religious Christian."⁴⁹

Money and the Preacher

Wells suggested six procedures by which the preacher might better remember a message.⁵⁰ These included fixing the attention, forming a clear and distinct conception of the subject being treated, increasing money's storehouse, coloring ideas under proper heads, adopting a progressive schedule, and attempting to solve difficult scientific, mathematical, and theological problems.

A good money, Wells believed improved judgment. "By acquiring a rich treasure of wisdom," he said, "you will have new principles of truth, more useful actions and observations always ready at hand to direct and assist your judgment."⁵¹

In particular, Wells urged the cultivation of money to increase the capacity of the Christian to receive and to retain sermons. Such training, he believed, enlarged spiritual capacity and enriched character. He offered this opinion by this personal testimony:

⁴⁸Wells, "The Improvement of the Mind," *ibid.*, 8, 340.

⁴⁹*ibid.*, 8, 340. ⁵⁰*ibid.*, pp. 344-374.

⁵¹*ibid.*, pp. 374-375.

I have known children, who from their early years have been constantly trained up and taught to remember a few sentences of a sermon besides the text, and by this means have grown up by degrees to know all the distinct parts and branches of a discourse, and in time to write down half the sermon after they were home, in their own copylation, and the improvement of their friends. Whereas those who have never been taught to use their memories in their younger parts of life, lose every thing from their thoughts when it is put off from their ears, and come home from sermons and edifying sermons, pleased, it may be, with the transient sound, and commending the preacher, but unimproved, without any growth in knowledge or piety.⁶⁶

In this observation, Watts indicated the two values of an improved memory: (1) the increase in the mind's power to receive, retain and recall; and (2) the effect on the character caused by the material retained.

The Ultimate Purpose of Preaching

By this latter effort, memory's relationship to character, Watts related this faculty to the ultimate purpose of preaching—the growth of Christian character. Only memory, he believed, afforded a stable and long-term foundation for building vital religion in the character of the individual and thus of the nation. "The memory . . . is made to receive divine truths, to be stored with the ideas of God and his grace," he declared. "It is given to cherish and apply the heart and tongue upon all occasions, for worship, for conference, and for holy joy."⁶⁷ In Watts, a man's character and memory were one. Both by divine purpose and by human physiology, character and memory were organically united. In one passage he declared that materials stored in the memory

⁶⁶Watts, p. 306.

⁶⁷Watts, "Sermons," *Works*, I, 58.

formed a character "large."⁶⁸ In another he called the process of adding to memory's storehouse a method by which character was "cultivated by degrees."⁶⁹ In short, in Watts, what a man remembered largely constituted his character.

This union between character and memory's content not only inspired his efforts in songs, catechisms, and sermons, but also influenced many of the elements of his theory of preaching.

Conclusion

Watts's unusual emphasis on memory requires evaluation rather than repetition. Are minutes are his value? Do there support for his belief in the organic unity between man and his memory? Will he make a contribution to the pastor's ultimate goal of feeding Christian character?

First, Watts's value are of historical as well as practical importance. By the singleness of his analysis, he furnished a valuable survey of eighteenth-century thought on memory aids. The practicality of his principles and procedures receives favorable judgment by a comparison with present-day treatments of the subject. Specifically, the Reverend William Brew's book, *Key to Memory*, derives from Watts both material and methods for a minister's use of memory.⁷⁰

⁶⁸Watts, "A Maxims on the Way of Instruction by Catechisms," 1704, III, 285.

⁶⁹ibid., p. 285.

⁷⁰William Brew, *Key to Memory* (Chicago, 1905).

Second, without attempting to judge its correctness, it is evident that Walle's belief is as equally odd between him and his theory has had historical succession. F. V. Delagrove assigns to the eighteenth century the inception of the theory that memory has a physical basis, but admits that the "older conception came late, for until 1770 this almost was either rejected or received slight attention."⁷² During the same late eighteenth-century period, P. V. Klaproth-Green re-stated Walle's basic theory by declaring that "memory is a definite faculty, and has its seat in the basal ganglia of the brain, separate from, but associated with, all the other functions of the mind."⁷³ A half-century later Ernest A. Hilgard declared that "Walle's believes were hence theory essential. . . . The brain concept has been further elaborated by Brier (1836) and by Watson (1846). . . . In view of the doctrine of traces the present psychologist is able to represent a past event to the present."⁷⁴ In the field of philosophy, Henri Bergson begins his book, Matter and Memory, with this pertinent assertion, "This book affirms the reality of spirit and the reality of matter, and tries to determine the relation of the one to the other by the study of a definite example, that of memory."⁷⁵ Summarizing that judgment upon

⁷²F. V. Delagrove, Memory (New York, 1880), p. 46.

⁷³P. V. Klaproth-Green, Memory and The Cerebration (New York, 1877), p. 3.

⁷⁴Ernest A. Hilgard, Principles of Learning (New York, 1961), pp. 146-147.

⁷⁵Henri Louis Bergson, Matter and Memory (New York, 1927), p. vii.

psychological and philosophical theory is not in the province of this study, it is necessary, however, to point out that the historical discussion of which Watts is a part lends support to his theory.

Third, Watts's theory of memory presents an approach to the fundamental and continuing problem of building character. To demonstrate the cogency of the problem, a nature statement is presented. August Heller Mueller and Francis Theodore Perkins declare, "Civilization has been built largely by an engineering of the forces of natural nature. From now on there must be equally and painstakingly an engineering of human nature. . . ."¹⁷ To this, a correct and adequate psychology is the key. Watts, as has been stated, accepted the problem as possible of solution; not only by religion, not by psychology alone. Preaching and teaching, homiletical and rhetorical expression, formed the core of Watts's method. By these he believed memory could be supplied materials with which to construct permanent character. Such action was a part of the ideal. Each word was a contribution to memory's resistance of inviolated character.

The life of the Reverend John Horton (1795-1861) affords a pertinent example of how this spiritual "ideal," as formulated by Watts's material, might develop character and guide conduct. Before the age of six and at his mother's knee, Horton recited Watts's hymns and learned his Exhortations from the Lives and Writings of David.¹⁸ When Horton, orphaned like this one, his very assignment followed a contemplation

¹⁷August Heller Mueller and Francis Theodore Perkins, Principles of Social Engineering (New York, 1934), p. viii.

¹⁸Reverend Horton, John Horton (London, 1904), p. 6.

against the plain principle of Watts's *Exposition*. When faced with scepticism, he quoted Watts's reply "almost before he realized that he was doing."⁷⁷ His conversion followed the more positive theology of Watts.⁷⁸ After his conversion he called Watts his spiritual "master," and built his educational system around Watts's principles.⁷⁹ Indeed, his life was so patterned after the course of the early "holiness" that even in his old age he breathed the spirit and pursued the path which had been implanted in his memory and had become the very core of his character.⁸⁰

There is memory, then, Watts saw a faculty of man especially connected with both character and conduct. By adapting preaching materials and methods to memory's requirements, Watts believed that the pastor brought a tool by which he might scripture the masses soul. This accounts for the importance of memory in Watts's preaching theory.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, Appendix, p. 178.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, *Ibid.*, 2, 83-84.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 300, 307, 308, 309.

CHAPTER V

METHOD: THE FUNCTION OF METHOD

"By and large, the methodology of a period," declares Mortimer J. Adler, "whether explicitly stated as logic or as a psychology, or perhaps merely exemplified in the intellectual products, is a sensitive index of the typical intellectuality of the period."¹ When this principle is reversed, an important auxiliary condition: the methodology of an individual is an index of his personal "intellectuality." Intellectuality and methodology cannot be divorced. Recognizing this relationship, whether in formation or arrangement, George Bernard, "let thought alone not shape itself spontaneously. Nor will it find the natural order without the tireless and rigorous working of the writer's best calculating power."² Proper methodology is as necessary as thought.³

Only upon his recognition of this principle can Burke's emphasis upon methodology be understood. To him, proper methodology was essential in achieving truth, in organizing knowledge, in effecting communication. Knowing that "a clear and distinct idea" is not enough, he advocated, added as the only means to "secure my thoughts from that confusion,

¹Mortimer J. Adler, *Encyclopedia* (New York, 1967), p. 1.

²John F. Boring, *The Practical Elements of Rhetoric* (Boston, 1966), p. 291.

³*Ibid.*

darkness, and mistake, which inevitably attend the restrictions and distortions even of the brightest genius who dispenses the rules of it.⁴ For this reason he wrote a treatise on ontology as a philosophical foundation for method, formulated standards and rules for using good method in searching out and communicating knowledge, and advocated appropriate methods for effective person-to-person communication.

Ontology: The Philosophy of Being

In *Method*, method was properly founded on that branch of philosophy known as ontology. He considered ontology a useful science "which teaches us to place every being and every thought and idea in its proper order in our minds, and gives us an extensive and regular view of things."⁵ Having looked long, but in vain, for a satisfactory treatise on the subject, he published his own "brief and expeditious sketch of notions that relate to this science."⁶ He believed this material had wide practical value, especially for a speaker.

Specifically defining ontology as "a discourse of being in general, and the various and most universal modes or affections, as well as the several kinds or divisions of it," Watts included in this science "not only whatever actually is, but whatever can be." The "affections" of being he reported as "all powers, properties, accidents,

⁴Watts, "Logic," *Logic*, V, 166.

⁵Watts, "Ontology," *Logic*, V, 411.

⁶Watts, "A brief Sketch of Ontology or, The Science of Being in General," *Logic*, V, 428.

relations, actions, passions, dispositions, internal qualities, external adjuncts, considerations, or circumstantial whatsoever." Because he thought that being was understood through these "affections," he laid down this general scheme as the basis of his analysis:

The most general and extensive distribution of the affections of being is into absolute and relative.

Absolute affections being to each being considered in its self and these are nature or essence and existence, duration, and unity, power and act.

Relative affections or relations arise from some respect which distinct beings bear to one another, or, at least, to some part or property of themselves. Now these are real or mental.

Real relations are those which arise from the constitution of any being among others in the universe, to which it has a real reference, whether we think of it or no. Such are, time and part, cause and effect, subject and adjunct, time and place, agreement and difference, number and unity, to which may be added truth and profusion, last the metaphysicians should complete this division.

Mental relations are such as arise not from things themselves, but only from our manner of conceiving them and referring one thing to another. Such are abstracted or mental notions, signs, language, and particularly all metaphysical considerations and terms of art.

The remainder of Witt's treatise on ontology is, fundamentally, a further breakdown of each of these categories into a system of parts, presented with appropriate concepts and examples. This system offered, he believed, an orderly pattern by which any subject might be studied, divided, related, compared, or contrasted.

The Art of Method

Upon the foundation of his philosophical doctrine, Witt built a very practical art of method. He stated not only how he method is

direction and disposition. Viewed in the most limited sense, method concerned the arrangement and management of the parts of a discourse. In a broader sense, it included principles of equal importance to the basic art of composition itself.

The Nature of Method

Watts believed that when reality was investigated by ontology the results could be placed "in such order, as is most convenient to obtain ease and progress."¹⁷ This, he said, is the work of method. "Method is the disposition of a variety of thoughts on any subject, in such order as may best serve to find out unknown truths, to explain and confirm truths that are known, or to fix them in the memory."¹⁸ Like Bacon, Watts placed method under logic, but unlike Bacon he shared method with rhetoric.¹⁹

Fundamental to Watts's analysis of method was its division into two kinds: "natural" and "artificial." "Natural method," Watts declared, "is that which observes the order of nature, and proceeds in such a manner, as that the things which follow depend in a great measure on the things which go before."²¹ He then subdivided natural method into "synthetic" and "analytic." By synthetic, he meant that order which

¹⁷Watts, "Logic," *ibid.*, 7, 165.

¹⁸*Ibid.*

¹⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 146-156. See Peter Watts, *Michaelian Ethics* (New Orleans, 1973).

²¹*Ibid.*, pp. 166-167.

begin with the parts and proceeds to the study of the whole. He called this "the method of composition."¹² Analytic, on the other hand, begins with the whole and proceeds toward the study of the parts. He called this the method of resolution.¹³ Usually speaking, truths are discovered by the analytic method and explained and proved by the synthetic.¹⁴ In practice, however, as White recognized, the methods were usually mixed.

The only necessary order to nature, White held, was that the "knowledge of things following depend on the knowledge of the things which go before."¹⁵ Thus he subordinated method to purpose by declaring that "a clear and judicious prospect of our ends and end design must regulate all method whatsoever."¹⁶

No doubt this assertion of the primacy of purpose led White to give the greater importance to his second division of method: the arbitrary. Though nature's order was ignored by the arbitrary method, White recommended it "to treasure up things and retain them in memory to borrow and pursue method to any position in the religion or civil life; or to delight, amuse, or entertain the mind."¹⁷ White did not divorce the "arbitrary" method from logic, though he admitted its chief use was in poetry and oratory.¹⁸ In addition to detailing several specific examples of the arbitrary method, White explained that some

¹² *Idib.*, p. 187.

¹³ *Idib.*

¹⁴ *Idib.*, p. 188.

¹⁵ *Idib.*, p. 189.

¹⁶ *Idib.*

¹⁷ *Idib.*

¹⁸ *Idib.*, p. 191.

speakers by the skilful use of omissions, insertions, digressions, or insertions "place everything in the most affecting light." He asserted, however, "that knowledge of natural method enabled them to better judge what to choose and what to reject; and how to dress and manage the whole more before them, so as to attack their own side with greater glory and success."¹⁸ By this means Watts related the natural and the arbitrary methods to the field of rhetoric.

The Rules of Method

For the effective use of method, Watts suggested seven standards, and formulated rules for their attainment. "It must be, 1. Safe. 2. Plain and easy. 3. Shortest. 4. Full, or without defect. 5. Work, or without superficiality. 6. Proper to the subject and the design. 7. Connected."¹⁹

Safe. To secure method from error Watts gave four suggestions. He emphasized the necessity of laying a careful foundation for any discourse in accurate propositions, exact definitions, correct divisions, and the proportioned distribution of material. Familiarity with these fundamentals was viewed as a necessity for finding sound proofs and meeting objections. Comparing proof to a chain, he urged, "Use that every link of your chain of reasoning be strong and good." By these procedures objections might be, to some degree, prevented or anticipated. Simplicity and clarity, however, must not be sacrificed for the

¹⁸ ibid.

¹⁹ ibid., p. 171.

rule of refutation. Failure to follow these directions, writes Socrates, results in a weak argument.⁸²

Plain and long. To render useful "plain and easy, so that your hearers, or readers, as well as yourself, may run through it without embarrassment, and may take a clear and imaginative view of the whole subject" was Socrates's second aim. Factors in obtaining this goal included rhetorical principles and personal attitudes. In the area of procedure he advised graduated progress, laud style, and single divisions.

1. Begin always with those things which are best known, and most obvious, showing the mind way here no difficulty or fatigue, and proceed by regular and easy steps to things that are more difficult. And as far as possible, let not the understanding, or the proof of any of your positions, depend on the positions that follow, but always on those which go before.

2. Be not fond of crowding too many thoughts and reasonings into one sentence or paragraph, beyond the comprehension or capacity of your readers or hearers.

3. For the same reason, avoid too many subdivisions. Construct your series of thoughts in such a manner as may finish your whole argument with as few inferior branchings as reason will admit. And let them be such as are obvious and open to the understanding, that they may come within one single view of the mind.⁸³

In the realm of attitudes he advocated interested, understanding progression in study and the early establishment of the habit of exact conception.

Highly. Socrates indicated his third standard positively by

⁸² Idem.

⁸³ Idem, p. 176.

advising, "let your method be distinct." Negatively, he cautioned against "the perplexing mixture of things that ought to be separate."²⁴ To achieve the goal of distinctness he proposed four directions. First, the material in a discourse should be homogeneous. Second, complicated ideas should be divided into stages, simple parts. Third, each part should be treated in proper relationship but without interdigitation. Fourth, distinctness of ideas, as well as of expression, should be preserved.²⁵

Full. For method to be full, Watts specified, "nothing which is necessary or proper should be omitted."²⁶ He cautioned against skipping the difficult, failing to support the disputable, and omitting important circumstances.²⁷ He urged complete comprehensiveness, varied applications, and accurate divisions. Of particular value he prescribes one his standards to proportion "the magnitude of your matter, and the fulness of your great design, to the length of your time, and to the conveniences, delight, and profit of your learners."²⁸

Brevity. This principle of proportion suggested brevity, Watts's fifth standard. To escape redundancy he cautioned against needless repetition, tiresome applications, explanation where there is already understanding, and proof where there is no doubt. He saw special danger in the display of "loose forms" and parenthetical digressions.²⁹

²⁴ Full.

²⁵ Full.

²⁶ Full, p. 173.

²⁷ Full, p. 173.

²⁸ Full, pp. 173-174.

²⁹ Full, pp. 174-175.

believing that the "man who walks slowly but surely toward his journey's end" will arrive sooner, Watts summarized the relationship between the "fall" and the "short"

To sum up all: There is a happy medium to be observed in our method, so that the learner may not render the course obscure, nor the supposed teacher, nor our knowledge merely superficial. And on the other hand, that the fulsome and expensiveness of our method may not waste the time, tire the learner, or fill the mind with trifles and importunities.³⁰

Summary. In outline properly required, in Watts's view, three adaptations of method: (1) to the subject, (2) to the speaker's design, and (3) to the age and locality.³¹ The nature of the subject determined whether exposition, proof, or subscription was required. However it regulated the degree of development each part of the discourse should receive. Watts cautioned against "certain and precise rules of method." He declared that study of the subject and survey of the design would produce proper method "provided that we are sufficiently skilled in the general laws of method and order."³² Thus he spoke in behalf of liberty and variety of the treatment of speech or essay material. To be successful as a speaker or writer, however, one must also make the third adjustment mentioned above—"some little difference at least paid to the custom of the age wherein we live, and to the humor and genius of our readers or hearers."³³

Concluding. In reader discussion well connected, Watts advocated

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 175.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 176-177.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 177.

³³ *Ibid.*

unity, coherence, and easy transitions of thought.

1. Keep your main end and design ever in view, and let all the parts of your discourse have a tendency towards it, and as far as possible make that tendency visible all the way.
2. Let the natural relation and dependence of the several branches of your discourse be as just and evident, that every part may naturally lead onward to the next, without any large chasm or breach, which interrupt and deform the scheme.
3. Aspatial yourself with all the proper and desired forms of transition from one part of a discourse to another, and practice them as occasion offers.³⁴

The seven regulations thus outlined set, Watts believed, the standards necessary for sound and effective method. "Though they belong chiefly to the communication of knowledge," he declared, "yet an early and thorough acquaintance with them will be of considerable use toward the pursuit and attainment of it."³⁵

General Historical Evaluation of Method

The influence which Watts's doctrine of method exerted over his entire theory of contemplation is demonstrated by his prescriptions for definition and division.

Definition. Watts's theory of definition was the result of applied ontology.³⁶ First, the manner or genus was to be determined. To this was added the essential or specific difference. This union completed the definition. John Frow characterized this process by saying, "The classic theory of genus and species included species furnished as

³⁴Ibid., pp. 177-178. ³⁵Ibid., p. 178.

³⁶Ibid., p. 8.

ontological ground for judication. The latter consisted of statement of genus and the differentia which together locked off and identified the species in question.³⁷ While adhering to this classic pattern, Wette explained that he believed to be at odds with the clarity of the "positivistic philosophers."³⁸ The influence of Locke's philosophy by which the concept of pure substance was abandoned made even more necessary the definition of substance by its properties.³⁹

Division. Wette viewed division and abstraction, the complementary auxiliary, as essentially growing out of the limitations of man's mental capacity.

Since our minds are narrow in their capacity, and cannot survey the several parts of any complex being with one single view, we find some all things at once wherever we meet, as it were, take it to pieces, and consider of the parts separately till we may have a more complete conception of the whole.⁴⁰

Division, Wette believed, produced "scientific knowledge of an idea in all its parts," while abstraction produced "a comprehensive conception of a thing in its several properties and relations."⁴¹ His descriptions of both processes followed his ontological concept of method.⁴² He cautioned against clarity to all the parts of ontological analysis, however, by asserting that a "judicious mind may choose that are those circumstances, relations, and properties of any subject, which are most necessary to the present design of him that speaks or writes, either to

³⁷John Locke, Logic, the Theory of Inquiry (New York, 1891), p. 344.

³⁸Wette, "Logic," Logic, 7, 36.

³⁹Id., p. 35.

⁴⁰Id., p. 40.

⁴¹Id., p. 41.

⁴²Id.

explain, to illustrate, or to prove the point.⁴³

To assist in the process of division Watts suggested six rules:

Rule I. Each part singly taken must contain less than the whole, but all the parts taken collectively, or together, must contain nothing more nor less than the whole.

Rule II. In all divisions we should first consider the larger and more immediate parts of the subject, and and divide it at once into the more minute and remote parts.

Rule III. The several parts of a division ought to be so equalized that no one part ought not to contain another.

Rule IV. Let not subdivisions be too numerous without necessity. For it is better many times to distinguish most parts at once, if the subject will bear it, than to stress the discourse by successive dividing and subdividing.

Rule V. Divide every subject according to the special design you have in view.

Rule VI. In all your divisions observe with greatest carelessness the nature of things. And here I am constrained to make a subdivision of this rule into two very necessary particulars.

1. Let the parts of your division be such as are properly distinguished in nature.
2. Let the nature of the subject, considered together with the design which you have in view always determine the number of parts into which you divide.⁴⁴

Watts deliberately rejected the affectation of "explication or triplication," or of any forced artificiality.⁴⁵ Appalled with the multiple divisions characteristic of seventeenth-century discourses, he rejected them on the grounds that they were ill suited for "ready and effectual communication."⁴⁶

Specific Rejected Application of Method

Watts applied all these principles and procedures of method to various compositions. These contrasts which he drew show not only his

⁴³ *ibid.*, p. 66.

⁴⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 66-67.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, p. 66.

⁴⁶ *ibid.*, p. 177.

theory of reason method but also an anecdotal element characteristic of Wittke's writing. The first contrasted the young Tyne with the assumed Engelen. The second contrast was drawn between Polytechnic and Florida.⁴⁷ In the third Wittke contrasted contemporary procedure with the Puritan fathers.

Tyne and Engelen. The contrast between Tyne and Engelen detailed the difference in method between preaching that aimed at the display of personal erudition and preaching that aimed at the edification of the laity. Referring to this same period and distinction Haller declares:

The temptation of the preacher as an intellectual and a technician was to spend much of his time dividing and subdividing his text and applying footnotes not in helpfulest distinctions. If he were bent upon dazzling his audience or avoiding anything that might give personal offense, this was the safe course. On the other hand, the tendency of the preacher the sought to search texts and still motions was to dwell upon the "news" of a few general doctrines and to drive these home in direct application to the experience of the audience.⁴⁸

Wittke was more imaginative and specific in his contrast.

Tyne, in Wittke's estimation, was "a young preacher, just from

⁴⁷See Wittke, *History*, pp. 292, 293, 298. Also Wittke, "Classic-Literary Turnings," *ibid.*, p. 248. Such imaginative names were frequently used by Wittke. In some cases the power to show he referred to known; in others it is not. Wittke explains that Wittke referred to his sister Sarah as Gertrude, to Elizabeth Kane as Philomela, to the Quakers of Hartford as Quakers. There is good reason to believe that by Polytechnic he meant Peter House, the sixteenth-century philosopher and educational reformer. He indicated his use of such names by the belief that while Wittke was characterized in a general character, they were used to avoid formalism. In the specific references to the preachers mentioned in these examples, the key to identification is obvious.

⁴⁸William Haller, *The Rise of Revivalism* (New York, 1958), p. 139.

the schools of logic and divinity . . . fall, even to the hilt, with the force of his wit and learning."¹⁹ Watts's condemnation, however, was not against profit or learning, but against the method of display. Tyre's method, Watts explained, began with learned maxims, continued with classical quotations, needless ascriptions, unnecessary refinements, and confusing distinctions. It concluded ineffectually by requesting doctrine, appeal to conscience, and subscription to God. "In short, he has finished his work," Watts accused, "but he has done nothing."²⁰

Regulus, as Watts declared, was another sort of preacher.²¹ His text was direct, appropriate, and understandable. Inertial elements were ignored. Logic was used as a tool rather than as an ornament. The theme, plainly and quietly proposed, was illustrated "till the truth [became] evident and intelligible to the weakest of his hearers."²² His arguments were uniformly short and pointed. His major emphasis was upon application—"moving the doctrine into use and improvement."²³ Rational appeal was fully intermingled with such divines.²⁴ In short, Watts concluded that Regulus said "the nature of his subject, and the necessity of his hearers, the great rule to direct him what method he shall choose in every sermon, that he may better enlighten, convince and persuade."²⁵ This kept Regulus from being a "slave to forms and methods of any kind," and, at the same time, adopted "the usual organs and manner of

¹⁹Watts, "The Improvement of the Mind," *Works*, 7, 324.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 78, 364-365.

²¹*Ibid.*, 2, 365.

²²*Ibid.*, 78, 365-366.

²³*Ibid.*, 2, 366.

his ministry" take a method "natural, plain, and easy."²⁴ The contrasting results gained by Rogers' method Watts detailed as follows:

Thus the ignorant are instructed, and the growing Christians are established and improved: The stupid sinner is loudly aroused, and the reasoning soul receives consolation. The unbeliever is led to trust in Christ and his gospel; and the ignorant and sensual are civilized and reformed, are united and reformed. The inward voice of the Holy Spirit joins with the voice of the minister; the good man and the hypocrite have their proper portion assigned them, and the work of the Lord prospers in his land.²⁵

Polymath and Florist. Watts's second contrast dealt with the number and distinctness of a sermon's divisions. Preachers of "the many-branched discourse" were typified by Polymath: preachers of "the loose language" by Florist. Watts advocated a middle between these extremes.

The name Polymath—which was probably a veiled reference to Peter Lake—distinctly described the excessive and formal sub-divisions so popular among Puritan preachers of the period. Harold E. Cragg presents an explanation, if not a real defense of this procedure. Confirming that this method had descended in unbroken succession from medieval times, he claims that the habituation arose both from the scholastic training of the preachers and from the numerous uses of material which they attempted to crowd into each sermon.²⁶ "Strict order," says Cragg, "was the only alternative to other chaos."²⁷

Watts showed little sympathy for this sort of "branching variety."

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid., pp. 345-346.

²⁶ Harold E. Cragg, Puritanism in the Period of the Great Awakening, 1600-1650 (Cambridge, 1971), pp. 307-308.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 307.

By this method, he said, matter often was divided into "general, less general, special, and more particular heads," with a long series of subdivisions to "run the matter of them to righteousness, or even-universality."⁵⁸ "When I sit under such preaching," he declared, "I sleep sound brought into the valley of Rachel's vision; it is full of hope, and beauty, there were very many in the valley, and yet, they were very few; Ruth, David, I, &c."⁵⁹ Watts developed whether such method produced "from a mere barrenness of thought and native dryness of soul . . . or whether it arose from attraction of such a way of talking."⁶⁰ In any case, he likened the result to a dead oak tree that "may spread its limbs far and wide, but they are naked, withered, and useless."⁶¹

The case Flavel typified the "method" disinterested hearers for which Watts had even greater criticism. Burges assigns lack of a definite theology as a cause for this type of preaching.⁶² Watts, however, considered the "loose language" to be a reaction against the "many-branched" system. He said that Flavel "having taken a disagreeable view of one of Calvinism's lectures, . . . resolved his own lectures should have no distinction of particulars in them."⁶³ In Watts's view it was unreasonable to assert that such sermons had an "horrible and artificial method" with a "train of well connected reasonings," or that

⁵⁸Watts, "The Improvement of the Mind," Works, V, 383.

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 384.

⁶²Watts G. Burges, A History of Preaching (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1904), II, 303.

⁶³Watts, "The Improvement of the Mind," Works, V, 384.

all parts "in their long series, prove and support each other."⁶⁴ Investigation, he said, affirmed that when sentences were presented in this way listeners soon forget the whole.⁶⁵ Believing that this type of preaching "injured our pupils," Watts presented such sentences as "soft harpings," "continued threads of golden eloquence," "intended and successful species of oratory."⁶⁶

Watts summarized the results of these two unacceptable methods by saying, "In short, Fluency's students have some confusion in their knowledge, but Florida's learners have scarcely any knowledge at all."⁶⁷

Watts then asked this question, "Is there no medium between a sermon made up of sixty dry particulars, and a long loose declamation without any distinction of parts in it?"⁶⁸ The answer was presented in his instructions to preachers mentioned by the previously mentioned collection of John Wilson. Here Watts recommended that method follow the principles of division outlined above. The method should be clear, distinct, and apparent.⁶⁹ Proper and natural divisions should be indicated by markers.⁷⁰ There should be a small number of general heads with appropriate subdivisions.⁷¹ All parts should be closely connected.⁷² Such a method, Watts asserted, related both the speaker and the learner.⁷³

⁶⁴ ibid., p. 349.

⁶⁵ ibid.

⁶⁶ ibid., p. 349.

⁶⁷ ibid., p. 349.

⁶⁸ ibid., p. 349.

⁶⁹ Watts, "Sermon Attempt," ibid., III, 34-35.

⁷⁰ ibid., p. 35.

⁷¹ ibid.

⁷² ibid., p. 37.

⁷³ ibid., pp. 34-35.

It aided the speaker by making composition and delivery easier. The paper was beneficial in immediate understanding and future recollection. This method was Watts's "happy notion." In addition to the practical usefulness, such a method, Watts said, served a second function. Lacking "like a tape ball of knowledge in the visitor, without the beautiful and profitable appearance of leaves and froth,"⁷⁴

Our Pastors and Our Contemporaries. Watts's final contrast was between the rugged effectiveness of the Puritan "Pastors" and the polite elegance of contemporary preachers. That the methodology of the earlier Puritans "made too great account of the sciences of logic and metaphysics, and the formalities of definition and division" was corrected by Watts.⁷⁵ He contended strongly, however, for their fundamental method of treating "their serious work upon the model of doctrine, reprove, and use."⁷⁶ To him, this procedure was the foundation for "direct and distinct address to the consciences of sinners and sinners."⁷⁷

For the contemporary pattern of "polite" sermons Watts had only disgust. He felt such methodology arose from "a humane and rather contempt of the nature and preaching of our forefathers."⁷⁸ He condemned the prevailing fashion of producing a sort of sermon in which pastors "talk a whole hour without order and without edification, [rather] than be suspected of using logic or method in [their] discourses."⁷⁹

⁷⁴ibid., p. 85.

⁷⁵Watts, "The Improvement of the Mind," ibid., 9, 180.

⁷⁶ibid.

⁷⁷ibid.

⁷⁸ibid.

⁷⁹ibid.

In these three contexts Vatta vindicated the use of a plain and distinct method. The preacher's subject--the gospel--and his design--edification--combined with the spiritual needs of the hearers to recommend a "natural, plain, and easy" method for serious discourse.

Conclusion

By way of summary let us consider three questions. First, what controlling influences shaped Vatta's doctrine of method? The answer to this question depends upon how one approaches it. If judged by ontology, his theory of method was subject-controlled. For ontologically viewed, it was based on an extant analysis of the properties and relations of the subject studied. If judged by logic, however, Vatta's method was controlled more by the speaker's design. For logically viewed, it was guided by the requirements of systematic investigation, clear explanation, and convincing argumentation. If judged functionally, Vatta's method was most influenced by the audience. For, as a preacher seeks the conversion and edification of his hearers, he recognized that method must be shaped by the limitations of memory, the human variables of time and space, and the spiritual conditions present in the audience.

Second, what parallels with other theories of method are revealed in Vatta's writings? Here it should be noted that Vatta himself admitted a strong scholastic influence, claiming only to have reported scholasticism's implications and observations. However, though never explicitly recognized by him, Vatta's doctrine of method is similar to those set

forth by Fosses and Baines.⁶⁰ As Fosses and Baines and later, Velle made useful a part of logic from which rhetoric borrowed what principles and rules it might need. Unlike Fosses, however, Velle made no sharp distinction between logic and rhetoric on the basis that the first belonged to the world of learning and the second to that of practical affairs. Likewise in the area of relationships, Velle justified himself upon a strong Puritan influence, although he rejected the traditionally intrinsic method and followed the simplifications introduced by Richard Hooker.⁶¹ Velle condensed, however, the basic Puritan method of doctrine, reason, and use.

Undoubtedly, the pressures of his environment and influences upon Velle's doctrine. Revell explains how seventeenth-century social pressures caused rhetorical theory "to become simpler and less ritualistic in all respects, the doctrine of arrangement being no exception."⁶² As a specific example, Revell quotes from Joseph Glavin, "Method is necessary both for the understanding, and memory of the learners; and when a discourse both in order, and connection, one part gives light to another."⁶³ The method Glavin advocated, declares Revell, was natural

⁶⁰Edward Fosses Revell, "English Backgrounds of Rhetoric," *History of English Rhetoric in America*, ed. Carl R. Vallentyne (New York, 1977), pp. 29, 30.

⁶¹W. Fosses Mitchell, *English Eighteenth Century from Andrew to William* (London, 1970), p. 371.

⁶²Edward Fosses Revell, *Logic and Rhetoric in England, 1600-1700* (Princeton, 1960), p. 309. See also Joseph Glavin, *A Treatise on the Art of Preaching* (London, 1670).

⁶³*Ibid.*, p. 370.

clean, simple.²⁵ This bare statement indicates that Weiss was a follower of what Howell calls the "new prototype."

Third, could Weiss's method be used today? Certain elements of his method have enduring value. His emphasis upon neatness, simplicity, clarity, and order has abiding merit. On the other hand, though Weiss believed he had escaped the complexities of the early Partians, much of what he retained would be judged as heavy, cumbersome, and mechanical by present-day students. This does not condemn Weiss. It must be admitted that if much of his method could not be used with present day printing material, his material could not be presented without employing his method. Undoubtedly, the adoption of Weiss's methodology would seriously affect the materials of contemporary printing.

²⁵ ibid.

CHAPTER VI

WILL: THE NATURE OF WORK

Introduction

Willis often used an anecdote to provide insight into a profound truth. Thus, to explain the relationship between spirit and substance in Christian preaching, he related a parable concerning the wives Crithille and the wise Placencia.

According to Willis's story, these two friends attended a service in one of the local churches. The preacher spoke substantial truth. His applications were pertinent. His manner was fervent. In spite of these merits, however, Crithille had only criticism. The pastor's words were at times so new and vague and at other times so affected, Crithille complained, that all appetite for profit from the sermon was lost. The gentle Placencia made no defense, but instead invited her critical friend to dinner the following Wednesday. He accepted with pleasant anticipation.

As Crithille expected, Placencia's food was delicious, delicious, and delightfully varied. To his surprise, however, the dinner was served in a most unfashionable manner, here on unglazed dishes and there with gaudy cover. After partaking heartily of the meal, Crithille questioned his hostess about the general service. Not to catch the flavor as well as the point of the story, the conclusion is best related in Willis's own words:

I meant, said Placencia, to try whether your stomach was not in a more healthy state than your soul and conscience. You complained last Sunday, that the sermon was so dried and drained that you could not relish it; and though you confessed there was much truth and duty contained in it, yet you were so disgusted with the style of the preacher and his awkward manner, that you went away fretting at the discourse and received no profit at all; but you are yet not heartily upon the provisions of my table to-day, are you your stomach as spacious as to keep your fast, though the dishes and garnishes were enlarged enough, and very much akin to the manner you described. Critilla took the hint, and was convinced of his folly, begged pardon of Placencia, and leave for the doctors to attend with a better spirit in public converse. "For you have now taught us," says he, "to make this observation, that if the soul of a Christian be found in a healthy state, it will not give partial and refuse all spiritual food because it is not accompanied with very proper and useful discipline in the dispensing of it."¹

The moral of Watts's story, obviously, was that truth should be received in spite of the platform. This, however, explains only one side of the balance which he felt should be maintained between style and substance in preaching. On the other side, Watts recognized the inescapable efforts of style. Therefore, he investigated the basis, classified the various types, and proposed rules and principles for the effective use in the service of religion. He exhorted his fellow ministers to join him in disciplining their own composition as well as to seek high stylistic improvements. The importance of the substance in Christian persons required that the hearer receive truth in spite of style, yet equally demanded that the preacher understand and utilize all the powerful influence of a style appropriate to his subject, his audience, and his purpose.

¹Watts, "Religious Journal," *Works*, IV, 404-405.

The Basis of Style

Barthelme's lifetime prose style attained prominence in the varied and influential writings of Solzgenstein, Adorno, Brecht, Fielding, Heller, Voltaire, Swift, and Defoe. Great emphasis was also placed upon the analysis of style by these and other writers. While Barthelme obviously was influenced by this literary environment, his theory of style was chiefly shaped by the work of rhetoric.¹ Even in his poetic writings this emphasis was dominant.²

Barthelme's discussion of style was a mixture of grammar, psychology, logic, and rhetoric. To him, the fundamental problem in style arose out of the "poverty of language," which made it impossible for a speaker or writer to reserve a particular word or expression for each idea he wished to express.³ Single words were required to perform manifold duties. This, along with the fact that many words express complex situations, opened the way for equivocation, figurativeness, indistinctness, misunderstanding, and various psychological reactions.⁴ The fact that "words, whether . . . spoken or written, have no natural connection with the ideas they are designated to signify, or with the things which are represented in these ideas" was another source of confusion.⁵ As a

¹Barthelme, "The Improvement of the Mind," *Imagin*, 7, 213-214.

²Barthelme, "Spoken and Written Image," *Imagin*, 22, 176.

³Barthelme, "Language," *Imagin*, 7, 21.

⁴*Imagin*, 22-23, 24, 25, 26, 27.

⁵*Imagin*, 7, 21.

result, "one man includes more or less in his idea, than another does, while he affixes the same word to it," so that "they do not mean the same object, though they use the same name."⁷ These two factors—the poverty of language and variation in word usage by different individuals—combined, Verba concluded, to make clarity and precision of meaning extremely difficult to attain.

Verba taught that this descriptive weakness was matched by connotative confusion. Four terms, he declared, "are complex in sense [in that they] contain a primary and secondary idea in them."⁸ For an example Verba used the word "lie." "Lie," he explained, connotes not only the primary denotation of error, but also the secondary connotation of reproach. However, man's reactions to these connotations were not uniform.⁹

A third major element affecting style was the widespread use of figurative expression.¹⁰ "[Words] are used in a figurative or troped sense," Verba explained, "when they are made to signify some things, which only bear either a reference or a resemblance to the primary ideas of them."¹¹ Figures, he felt, though necessary to poets and orators, were to be used with caution by teachers.¹²

Verba saw three factors of denotation, connotation, and figurativeness as the necessary components out of which the speaker or writer must develop the type of style suited to his purpose.

⁷ Verba, p. 13.

¹⁰ Verba.

⁸ Verba, p. 26.

¹¹ Verba.

⁹ Verba, pp. 26, 27.

¹² Verba, pp. 27-28, 29.

Types of Style

In an effort to characterize different styles Watts used many descriptive phrases, such as "fantastic, learned," "mean, vulgar," "long and tedious," "gay and flowery," "flat and tedious."¹³ It was not by these adjectives, however, but rather by recognizing the distinct purposes of discourse that he differentiated among the basic types of style. Watts's clearest division was into discourses designed to inform the understanding and discourses designed to arouse the passions. The first required a type of style which Watts called "rationalism"; the second, one which he called "poetic." In the second division he included "passionative writing" as well as poetry. Preaching, however, along with all true persuasive address, required, he thought, a combination of both styles.¹⁴ This balance was necessary because preaching sought to instruct as well as to arouse.

The Instructional Style

Three factors involved in Christian preaching gave instructional style primary importance. First, the Christian's creed was a body of doctrine to be understood; second, the Christian's faith required a rational spirituality and third, the Christian's conversion accomplished a lasting persuasion based upon comprehension. "Next to obtain a perspicuous style," exhorted Watts, "remember you have to do with the

¹³Watts, "The Improvement of the Mind," *Works*, I, 381-383; "Sound and Spiritual Image," *Works*, IV, 254; Watts, "Poetry," *Works*, IV, 168.

¹⁴Watts, "An Author's Attempt," *Works*, III, 83-84; see also Watts, "English," *Works*, I, 174.

reasoning powers of man, is providing the ground of clarity.¹⁵ In this view, "a style fit for instruction" must be plain, perspicuous, and easy.¹⁶ In general, an elevated adaptation of style to audience and substance. More specifically, effectiveness in instructional style was gained, he felt, by the twin process of avoiding the faults of affectation and observing the rules of clarity.

In concerning the faults of style, Watts began by criticizing the "vain and foolish practice" who display Greek and Latin terms "where" plain English would serve as well.¹⁷ He retained such pomposity as a false show of learning. "To not affect terms of art on every occasion," he said, "has ever been learning by avoiding words and dark phrases."¹⁸ Especially strong was his warning to school-fresh professors against filling "their courses with logical and metaphysical terms in explaining the text."¹⁹ Though he granted that such "uncertain words of vanity" had aptness and served readers, he argued that clarity in logic and metaphysics were only tools for analysis. "The tools," he declared, "ought not to appear in the finished workmanship."²⁰ In a similar vein, he cautioned against the general use of words specifically limited to one particular class of people. "Scientific," or "theoretical terms" were declared unsuited to "lectures of instruction."²¹ Words "borrowed from

¹⁵ Watts, "An Eighth Attempt," *ibid.*, III, 85.

¹⁶ Watts, "Improvement of the Mind," *ibid.*, I, 20.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, I, 205.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*

the lower ranks of mental" could not be understood by "persons of liberal education."²²

The other obstacles to clarity were enumerated. One was derived from misguided imitation; the other resulted from inadequate organization of subject matter. Wells specifically noted that imitation of popular writings often resulted in copying over "the misunderstanding under the simplicity of such a style."²³ Especially where teaching was learned, thorough analysis and careful organization were required to guard against a long and tedious style.²⁴

From this negative approach, Wells turned to suggest the positive methods by which "perspicuity of style [might] be obtained."²⁵ He began by recommending a program of imitation and practice based upon a careful reading of those authors the writer as to "to convey their ideas into your understanding as fast as you or language can run over the sentence."²⁶ Second, he stressed a thorough knowledge of subject matter. "Get a distinct and comprehensive knowledge of the subject which you treat of," he advised. "Survey it on all sides, and make yourself master of it."²⁷ Third in importance to a knowledge of the subject, Wells noted proficiency in the language medium--the idiom, phrases, and structures. To develop skill in idiomatic and varied phrasing, he suggested the classical practice of taking a statement and turning it into all possible forms.

²² *ibid.*

²³ *ibid.*, p. 317.

²⁴ *ibid.*

²⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 317-321. ²⁶ *ibid.*, p. 317.

²⁷ *ibid.*

Then, by turning the active voice of verbs into the passive, and the assertive sense of nouns into the assertive, and allowing the connection of short sentences by different adverbs or conjunctions, and by adverbial clauses with a preposition brought instead of the relative, or by participial clauses put instead of the verbs, the repetition of the same thing instead of the assertion of the thing first proposed, a great variety of forms of speech will be created, which shall express the same sense.⁸²

To this he added, "Acquire a variety of words, a ready resource." To develop the habit of using short simple sentences he suggested the re-writing of passages.

I have so seldom so effectual to learn what I mean, as to take, one and then, some page of an author, who is guilty of such long involved periodical style, and translate it into plainest English, by dividing the ideas or the sentence number, and multiplying the periods, till the language becomes smooth, and easy, and intelligible at first reading.⁸³

Wells's final recommendation for gaining perceptively had to do with the importance of adapting ideas to one's learners. In this connection, he recommended a testing program in the laboratory of actual experience.

Think frequently in young and ignorant persons upon subjects which are new and unknown to them; and be diligent to enquire whether they understand you or no; this will put you upon changing your phrases and forms of speech in a variety, till you can hit their capacity, and convey your ideas into their understandings.⁸⁴

Wells's purpose in offering these suggestions to teachers was to help them achieve a style by which they might lead their "hearers slowly into the knowledge of the truth, and teach them to hold their faith on

⁸² Id., p. 300.

⁸³ Id.

⁸⁴ Id.

solid grounds. . . .²⁴ However, by their use he hoped that Christian doctrine would be conveyed into "the understandings of those of unlearned simplicity. . . ."²⁵

Poetic Style.

The second division of style, which he called "poetic," holds the power of the first lay in plainness, that of the second was in figures. While the end of the first was the giving of factual information, that of the second was fervent appeal.

Watts centered his discussion of poetic style in three classical figures of speech, *metaphor*, *metonymy*, and *synecdoche*. Since only the first of these is genuine to the problem of preaching, we discuss here still again Watts's belief that figurative language had the power to arouse the imagination and passions. It is for this reason, he declared, that the proper province is in poetry and oratory, "whose business is to move, and persuade, and work on the passions, as well as the understanding."²⁶ Watts explained this power of figures factually, philosophically, and functionally.

First, Watts distinguished factually between the literal and figurative use of words. When used in the literal sense, words signified only their primary meanings, but when used in the figurative sense words signified a new meaning bearing only a resemblance or reference to the

²⁴Watts, "An Author's Attempt," *Works*, III, 19.

²⁵Watts, "The Origin, or Cause of Improved Minds," in "Logic," *Works*, V, 31.

primary idea.³¹ In this, this figurative use of words was proper when the design was not merely to represent our ideas, but also to do so "with vivacity, spirit, affection, and power."³² At the same time, however, he warned that while such devices of several "make a deeper impression on the mind of the hearer, yet they do so often lead him into a mistake, if they are used at improper times and places."³³ The power of figures lay in their ability to arouse; their weakness in the resultant confusion of judgment.

Wells attempted to explain the power of figurative language on the basis of associational principles. He believed that memory, by a system of brain traces, could revive past experiences under the single stimulus of a word.³⁴ Imagination, in turn, had the power "to vary, enlarge, diminish, multiply, join and single ideas."³⁵ By stimulating memory and imagination simultaneously, figurative language had the peculiar power of going beyond single designation and arousing a wide range of associated emotional responses.

In addition to making the general statement that figures arouse men, and attempting to explain why this is so, Wells described the different ways in which figurative language may affect a reader or listener. In this connection, he analyzed the effects of the Poetics of Aristotle. For the ancient Greeks, he asserted, the Poetics kept "all the springs of

³¹ Wells, "Logic," *ibid.*, 7, 12.

³² *ibid.*

³³ *ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

³⁴ *ibid.*, 7, 12.

³⁵ *ibid.*

place *passion under* because they were written in the words, characters, and contents of the Jewish religion. He believed, however, that a Christian assembly was affected by the Psalms only to a limited degree.³⁰ The power of these ancient poems lay in the fact that they were "exactly suited to the very purpose and design for which they were written, and that both in the writer, and in the style, and in all their ornaments."³¹ As for the Christian congregation, he concluded that "any affection not consisting of propriety or interest in the work, to excite them at first, and to keep them lively."³² Figurative language, then, performed the function of appeal only in relation to the experiences and concerns of the hearers; words alone were insufficient.³³

Within this limitation, Watts asserted that the figures of poetry were "adorned with . . . allurements that lead the mind away in pleasing captivity."³⁴ Many parts of the discipline, he said, had this effect, so that even language itself became as a matter of the sublime style. Having pointed this out, Watts analyzed in detail how the present affliction of religion could be served effectively by the stylistic figures of poetry.

The anguish of inward grief, the secret strug-
 gles and attempts of conscience, the sweet reflecting hours, and
 occasional joys of devotion, the victory of a roused soul
 over a thousand temptations, the insupportable desires now
 born, from which there is no appeal; and the transport
 transports or ravings of the two eternal worlds--these images

³⁰ Watts, "Psalms, Lyms," *Engl.*, II, 651-654.

³¹ *ibid.*

³² *ibid.*

³³ *ibid.*

³⁴ *ibid.*

may be variously disposed, and from many poems. Her sight such performances, under a divine blessing, will best the dying glory of the nation to life and beauty? This would make a religion appear like itself, and condemn the transience of a profane world, ignorant of piety's pleasures.⁴³

Willing to "take hold of my handle of the veil," Watts saw in poetic style a neglected power adapted to the substance of Christianity. Without belittling the importance of poetic discourse, he suggested that by poetry "the same duty that might be despised in a sermon, when proposed to the hearer's ears, may soon, perhaps seize the lower faculties with superior powers of the mind to pity."⁴⁴ By assigning this persuasive task to poetry, Watts followed the Puritan tradition. Perry Miller and Thomas Johnson agree that the Puritans gave poetry "little consideration as an art; they thought of it simply as a means to an end. . . ."⁴⁵ (and) wrote their most ambitious poems for edification.⁴⁶ On the other hand, Watts's rhetorical usage of poetic style was a repudiation of much contemporary poetry. Tuckerville points out that the first half of the eighteenth century was dominated by the school of Pope—a style "extraordinarily smooth in expression and highly polished, . . . almost devoid of emotion."⁴⁷ Watts, however, deliberately refused

⁴³Watts, "Verse Imitate," *ibid.*, IV, 413.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, p. 414.

⁴⁵Perry Miller and Thomas B. Johnson, *The Puritans* (New York, 1956), p. 398.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, p. 398.

⁴⁷A. A. Tuckerville, *English Verse and Prose in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1961), p. 2.

to polish his poetry. He sought only the persuasive effect of oratory.

Preaching Preaching

Because preaching required both the informing of the understanding and the arousing of the passions, Watts regarded the effective sermon as a balanced combination of the two basic style types--instructional and poetic. This notion of balance controlled his conception of preaching style not only in broad relations, but also in the more specific properties of politeness, brevity, and distinctness.

The Balance of Figures. In the solemn responsibility of preaching, Watts constantly emphasized, "your first business is with the understanding."⁴¹ This primary appeal to reason demanded that in the early part of the sermon clarity be the guiding consideration. Figures were to be avoided. Exact meaning conveyed by accurate expression was the goal.

However, therefore, to find out all the clearest and most easy ways of speech, to convey divine truths into the minds of men. Seek to obtain a perspicuous style, and a clear and distinct manner of speaking, that you may effectually impress the understanding, while you preserve the words that you say as exactly imparted in the mind of the hearers the same ideas which you yourself have conceived, that they may never mistake your meaning.⁴²

One important Watts considered this search for exactness of expression may be illustrated by two of his own statements. First, the joy with which he greeted the discovery of a correct word is seen in his exclamation, "O what a blessed pleasure is it to hit upon a happy

⁴¹Watts, "In Public Discourse," sermons, III, 13.

⁴²ibid.

expression, that speaks our very soul, and fulfills all our meaning."⁵⁰

Second, the positivist earnestness of his quest for exact diction is reflected by his patient selection of every word and expression in composing his selections.

Perhaps it is not proper for us to say, and the world will hardly believe, what pains have been taken in composing these selections, especially the first and second of them with what care I have endeavored to select the most easy and necessary parts of our religion, in order to prepare them to the memory of children according to their ages; what laborious diligence has been used to seek out all the plainest and most familiar forms of speech, that the great things of God and the operations of the gospel might be brought home to the capacities of children. It is not for us to say how many hours, and days, and weeks, have been spent in reviewing and revisiting every word and expression, that, if possible, nothing might be inserted which might give just occasion of offense to pious persons and families, that nothing might be left out which was necessary for children to know in their tender ages; and that as words, phrases, or sentences, if possible, might be omitted which could not be brought to some measure within the reach of a child's understanding.⁵¹

Since clarity alone was inadequate for persuasion, later in the sermon more evocative language must be introduced. Watts cited the unidentified *Belshazzle* as "the only speaker who had obtained this art and honour of effecting persuasion by plain exposition alone."⁵² For effectiveness, therefore, the preacher must balance plainness with figures.

⁵⁰Watts, "A Guide to Prayer," *Works*, III, 144.

⁵¹Watts, "A Discourse on the Way of Destruction by Carelessness, and of the Just Honour of Composing Them," *Works*, III, 171.

⁵²Watts, "The Improvement of the Mind," *Works*, V, 211.

"bids your speech," he challengingly "constrains all the lively, forceful, and penetrating forms of speech, to make your words powerful and impressive on the hearts of your hearers."⁵³ Again, he declared that "the figures should be meeting . . . where the speaker has art enough to introduce it."⁵⁴ In providing the virtues the pastor was urged to "display the beauty and excellence of them, in their own agreeable and lovely forms and colors."⁵⁵ By means of figures, Watts declared, we "paint our themes in their proper colors, whether of the alluring or the forbidden kind."⁵⁶ In short, the proper preaching balance achieved clarity by plainness and power by figurativeness.

In his most complete list of figurative modes of expression Watts repeated stylistic means by naming only seven. To each he assigned a specific value.

1. Exclamations, which serve to set forth an affectionate wonder, a sudden surprise, or violent expression of anything on the mind.

2. Interrogations, when the plain sense of any thing we declare unto God is turned into a question, to make it more spiritual and affecting.

3. Appeals to God, concerning our own souls or actions, our sinners and deep sense of the things we speak to him.

4. Hyperbolicness, which are indeed our particular sort of Interrogations.

5. Optatives, or wishes, fit to set forth serious and earnest desires.

6. Anaphoras, that is, when in the midst of our addresses

⁵³Watts, "An *Artless Attempt*," *Watts*, III, 25.

⁵⁴Watts, "The Improvement of the Mind," *Watts*, V, 128.

⁵⁵Watts, "An *Artless Attempt*," *Watts*, III, 25.

⁵⁶*Watts*.

. . . we turn off the speech abruptly to our own souls,
being led by the violence of some sudden inward thought.

7. Exclamations, or rekindling our aspirations, which
arise as eager and inflated affections.²⁷

Thus it was by a balanced and ordered combination of the characteristics of the hortatorical style with the directness of the poetic style that Watts believed preaching effectiveness was achieved.

The Balance of Rhetoric. A second stylistic consideration in Watts's theory related to the point of speech. In the early Eighteenth century, there had been a coarseness of style. This he did not excuse. In the other hand, he deplored the contemporary slavery to "politeness." "We have such a value for elegance, and so often a taste for what we call polite," he accused, "that we dare not spoil the cadence of a period to give a touch of asperity to it, nor disturb the harmony of our sentences, to enter or to name the heads of our discourses."²⁸ He specifically condemned some ministers for forsaking the uses of Christ from their sermons "because it is a simplicity of an easy construction, and so harsh a sound."²⁹

Between these extremes, Dr. Watts advocated a practical balance. For the "too learned and polite" in the congregation, he believed that in parts of his sermons the wise preacher "take off, and render the sub-

²⁷Watts, "A Guide to Preyer," *ibid.*, III, 147-149.

²⁸Watts, "The Improvement of the Mind," *ibid.*, I, 356-371.
cf. statement by Earl of Chesterfield, "The elegance of the style, and the turn of the periods, seize the chief impression upon the hearers," *Letters to His Son by the Earl of Chesterfield* (2 vols.; New York, 1901), I, 141.

²⁹*ibid.*

by institutional procedures. But the season passed before the touring was complete. As it is with a preacher of variable display, Watts concluded. "He has finished his work, and he has done nothing."⁴² To illustrate proper balance Watts referred to an unidentified preacher who "laid in his younger days but few of those learned varieties, and age and experience have now worn them all off."⁴³ Learning was, then, the preacher's tool, to be used in the study but concealed in the pulpit. Words and phrases were to be chosen to meet the needs of the congregation rather than to demonstrate the preacher's learning.⁴⁴

The Balance of Scriptural Terms. There is his view the true spokesman of God was fundamentally a preacher of the Bible, the relationship between style and the scriptures was profound in Watts's thinking. The Bible, he said, offered a pattern for effective style, but only within limits. On the one hand, he asserted with positive enthusiasm the beauty and power of scriptural terms--"words of force and elegance to shape and allure the soul, glitter and sparkle like golden ore. . . ."⁴⁵ On the other, he insisted that the use of Bible terms should be proportioned, purposeful, and pertinent, and warned against "whole sermons of nothing else but a perpetual repetition of words of scripture." Within these limits, however, he recognized the value of "Bible phrases," and quoted this edict of the French critic Boileau:

⁴²Watts, p. 143.

⁴³Watts.

⁴⁴Watts.

⁴⁵Watts, "On Public Attention," *Works*, III; "A Guide to Preyer," *Works*, III, 148.

That the majesty of our religion, the holiness of its law, the purity of its morals, the height of its aspirations, and the importance of every subject that belongs to it requires a grandeur, a nobleness, a majesty, and elevation of style suited to the theme. Sparkling images and significant comparisons must be used, and are best borrowed from scripture; let the preacher, that aims at eloquence, read the prophets incessantly, for their writings are an abundant source of all the images and ornaments of speech.⁴⁵

In essence, then, Watts believed that the language and phrases of scripture were adaptable "patterns by which we should frame our worship and adjust it to our present state rather than direct of worship to which we should perfectly and unchangeably confine ourselves."⁴⁶ This balance, like the other two, would help to produce ideal sermons which in their style combined the power of the Bible with the touch of human soul.

Conclusion

The problems of style challenged Watts to seek a use of words suited to the purposes of the gospel in his day. Any judgment of his theory must admit that his doctrine for the effective use of style in the service of religion was clearly conceived and plainly presented. Moreover, certain aspects of his doctrine deserve emphasis.

First, though Watts subordinated style to substance, he nevertheless believed the power of words. Better, words fascinated him. To pursue his divine strategy he found the medium of language inescapable. He neither low holy the subject, he neither low bright the genius, the

⁴⁵Watts, "Sermon Upstart," *Works*, IV, 44-44B.

⁴⁶Watts, "Theater," *Works*, IV, 375.

poverty and richness of words were, he recognized, inseparably linked with all human communication. Words clarified or confused the message of God. Words expressed the thoughts of the mind and created their own reactions. Words both heavily and unobtrusively fully the power of words in the field of religion.

Expressions are useful, not only to dress our thoughts but sometimes to form and shape, and perfect the ideas and affections of our minds. The use of words makes us fully conscious of the things we consider. They serve to establish the holy passions of the soul as well as to express them. Our expressions sometimes follow and reveal the inner convictions. They fix and engage all our powers in religious and worship, and they serve to regulate as well as increase our devotion.¹⁰

Because he was that a proponent of verbal expression, Kottke felt that the preacher must find "a way with words" by which their convictions were availed and their powers increased for the service of God. It was he that and that he sought to uncover the basis of style, to differentiate his types, and to discover and present principles and rules for the attainment of effectiveness in its use. *Idyls* may vary concerning the value of his suggestions, but his justification of the importance of style to preaching is still convincing.

The other observation that must and be overlooked in Kottke's teaching about style is his appreciation of the importance of the "personal" and the "personal." Style was individualistic, Kottke kept declaring, only when it was adapted to the level of the participating minds, and style was moving only when the content and expression of the participating lives

¹⁰Kottke, "A Guide to Prayer," *Idyls*, III, 141.

were directly touched. Paul likewise calls this "the sense of . . . contemporaneity," when he writes:

To be sure, the word addresses itself to particular people at particular times in particular situations, and we have not lost sight of that particularity. But the particularity in any given case is, for our purpose, perhaps more contingent than essential. It matters comparatively little that Paul was writing in Rome to a Jewish-Christian congregation during the early years of the second half of the first century. The most striking feature of it is the strong contemporaneity.¹⁴

With strongly believed in the necessity of words related to the personal and present interests of the hearers in order to engage style for the work of the ministry. On this basis, he pleads for exhortations couched in language adapted to youth, for songs written in terms of immediate experience, and for sermons styled to meet the needs and touch the hearts of those who heard.

¹⁴ Words and Deeds, 127 (October, 1971), 362.

CHAPTER VII

DELIVER: EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Introduction

English preaching, Watts indicated, consisted less of an occurrence in a friend's house. It seemed that a certain Mrs. was much displeased by the bad conduct of her maids. Since her husband was at home, she asked him to reprove the servants. But the husband begged to be excused "from the company of the kitchen and the parlor," saying to his wife that "if her maids were so culpable, she herself must reprove them herself." Mrs. replied readily, "I cannot think, however, to show my parsimony, if you will write down a chiding, I will go immediately and read it to them."¹

By this story Watts illustrated a fundamental weakness of the English preacher. "A mere reader," he concluded, "who really tells the people what his paper says, seems to be as void of all [the] necessary qualifications of delivery as his paper is."² To counteract this deficiency, he exhorted his fellow ministers with "pathetic language" and words of "wonderful efficacy and divine power."³

Let us speak with such a serious soul as becomes the service of God and the salvation of his church, with such compassion to dying souls as is manifested in those gospel of love, with such inward fervor and holy sollicitude for the interests of our labours, that if it were possible, let the soul of one sinner

¹Watts, "Wilmington Novellist," 1793, IV, 263.

²*Ibid.*, p. 264.

within the reach of our preaching might view of this perishing misery and eternal joy. Oh let us and dare be bold and lifelines in promoting the works of everlasting life, nor lazy and indolent in carrying these arrears of divine love to a lost and perishing world.³

But not content with adding to the many criticisms of contemporary preaching, Watts made a contribution toward its improvement. He sought to discover and refine methods for effective sermon delivery. Though he also formulated principles and rules for good reading, he strongly advocated extempore preaching and developed suitable procedures for the effective use.

Eighteenth-Century Preaching

Watts's contribution to the art of delivering sermons was made during a period of transition. The influence of the puritan and reformed. Cold formalism was challenged by the growing ferment of revival. Preaching methods were in a state of flux, and criticism was rampant.

The Reading Precept

The glory of the English pulpit was the seventeenth century.⁴ Pulpits of the Establishment and then been supported by such preachers as John Donne, Joseph Hall, William Laud, Jeremy Taylor, Isaac Barrow, John Tillotson, and Robert South. Among the Dissenters were Richard Hooker, Samuel Butlerfield, Edward Calamy, John Owen, John Howe, John Bunyan, and Benjamin Keach. This roster has never been surpassed.

³Watts, "in Watts's Account," Watts, III, 36-37.

⁴Haynes, A History of Preaching, II, 136-137.

Though by the early eighteenth century the influence of the pulpit had waned, some of the preachers of this period cannot be ignored.³ The preaching of Joseph Butler, Thomas Watson, Jonathan Swift, Francis Atterbury, John Barrow, George Whitefield, John Wesley, Matthew Henry Town, Philip Doddridge--in fact, the age of Isaac Watts--cannot be denied a valid recognition of merit.⁴

During the second half of the eighteenth century a new day of preaching power dawned. Daniel F. Estlin credits this era with the revival of apostolic preaching.⁵ Bishop Kyle asserts that the "inspired constancy by which the spiritual reformers of the . . . century carried on their operations was . . . the old apostolic weapon of preaching."⁶ The homiletical theories of Isaac Watts were a factor in this transition.

The Technique of Preaching.

In evaluation of eighteenth-century preaching one ignores the variety. It was extreme, and certainly consistent with the low moral and spiritual tone of a large segment of the clergy, was the conventional, formal preaching of the latitudinarians,⁷ at the other was the left-hearted evangelizing of the great revivalists.⁸ In his history of

³Walter Charles Ferguson, The Art of Preaching in the Light of the History (New York, 1901), p. 102.

⁴Ferguson, A History of Preaching, II, 126 ff.

⁵Daniel F. Estlin, A Treatise on Preaching (New York, 1854), p. 51.

⁶Kyle, Christian Preachers, p. 25.

⁷Ferguson, A History of Preaching, II, 17.

⁸Atterbury and Watson, The English Church in the Eighteenth Century, p. 314.

England, from Scotland this latter group coming,

their voice was soon heard in the wildest and most barbarous corners of the land, among the black moors of Northumberland, or in the fens of Lincoln, or in the long galleries where in the prisons of his labour the Cornish miner listened to the wailing of the sea. Mr. Lefkoff's preaching was such as England had never heard before, theatrical, extravagant, often commonplace, but beating all criticism by its intense reality, the maintenance of belief, its long tremulous sympathy with the sin and sorrow of mankind. It was no common colporteur who could bring gold from the class-biased Franklin and solicitation from the fastidious Rogers Walpole, or who could lead down from the top of a green hill at Haguenau as twenty thousand soldiers, spring from the forested wood-piles, and set us to preaching the words "making white channels flow their bloodiest current!"¹¹

Between the extremes of Unitarianism and orthodoxism, gradually among the Dissenters, evolved a type of preaching at once fervent and reasoned, dedicated to the purpose of saving souls, and adapted to the persuasion of the common man.¹² There was an attempt to extract a compromise between two unacceptable methods, but rather a natural outgrowth of a doctrinal position and evangelized purpose. As Rogers says, such preaching was not the result of reaction but, instead, the fruit of a search for a method of "presentation of the gospel which should nourish the heart as well as the reason."¹³ White in his practice and theory expressed this aspect of the total picture of eighteenth-century English preaching.

¹¹John Richard Green, *England* [4 vols.; New York, 1896], VIII, 155-156.

¹²Miller, *Days of Puritanism*, p. 32.

¹³Rogers, *A History of Preaching*, II, 109.

The Critics of Preaching

It is natural that criticism of preaching should abound in a period when preaching itself was in ferment. Swift, Addison, and the Earl of Shaftesbury all spoke out against the prevailing practices. As White criticized the imitative reader, so Swift explained that "some clergy-men with their heads held fast from the beginning to the end, without an dash of the reader . . . [or] popping up and down every moment from their paper to the audience [appear] like an idle schoolboy on a repetition day."¹⁴ Addison's solution for the problem of poor delivery was simple. He advocated that preachers, "instead of venting their spirits in laborious compositions of their own, [should] endeavor after a business elevation" by reading great masterpieces written by others.¹⁵ White, however, was content neither with negative criticisms nor with superficial solutions. He sought to discover and present in readable form a body of theory aimed at improving both reading and preaching.

The Book System

The practice of reading sermons was widespread in the English pulpit of White's time. Ordinarily the reasons assigned for this custom have been historical. During the tumult of the reign of Henry VIII, strict regulations were laid upon the clergy because of the strong and stubborn convictions held by ministers against the authors of opposing

¹⁴Jonathan Swift, *The Works of the Rev. Jonathan Swift, D.D.*, ed. Thomas Warton (4 vols., LONDON, 1751), VIII, 14-15.

¹⁵Joseph Addison, *The Works of the Right Honourable Joseph Addison*, ed. Richard Bury (8 vols., LONDON, 1750), II, 436-437.

parishes. This led to restricting the art of preaching to licensed ministers and to the necessity of set material. As Burnet says, "Those who were licensed to preach, being often assured of their success, and acquiescing being made to the King by his men on both sides, they were generally to write and read their sermons."¹⁶ In an attempt to stop this practice Charles II prohibited the reading of sermons, but without avail.¹⁷ In Victor's day the read sermon was still common.

Concomitant Exaltations of the Read Sermon

The read sermon was not without defenders. Bishop Burnet said, "It has made our sermons more exact and has produced many volumes of the best that are written."¹⁸ Bishop Thomas Sprat boasted that "the sermons preached every Sunday in this our Kingdom, by the Church of England Clergy in this age, are more excellent compositions . . . than have been delivered, in the same space of time, throughout the whole Christian world besides."¹⁹ Swift, though disgusted with sermons poorly read, admitted that failure to follow this practice would decrease the value of sermons "For want of time to correct and improve them."

¹⁶Gilbert Burnet, The History of the Reformation of the Church of England (A vol., New York, 1877, I, 303.

¹⁷W. Gougeon, "Ecclesiastes Declined: Being a Treatise on Preaching, as Adopted in a Church of England Congregation," in A Series of Letters to a Young Clergyman (New York, 1890), pp. 320-321.

¹⁸Gilbert Burnet, "A Discourse of the Restored State," The Clergyman's Instructor (London, 1897), p. 337.

¹⁹Thomas Sprat, "A Discourse by Thomas Sprat, D.D., Lord Bishop of Rochester, to the Clergy of his Diocese," Clergyman's Instructor (London, 1897), p. 349.

At the same time, the deficiencies of the real women were recognized even by his defenders. Criticism centered chiefly in the manner of delivery. Bishop Barnett complained, "These fine real ought certainly to be at a little more pains, than for the most part they are, to read true, to pronounce with an emphasis, and to raise their heads, and to direct their eyes to their hearers."²⁰ And even Bishop Doane believed "a natural, ready, robust, yet unobtrusive force of pronunciation" would add to the "great popularity" of the real women.

The Art of Reading

To better, real reading was an art that could be learned. This belief was based upon practical teaching experience in the Parsonage and Abbey households, as well as a thorough study of the available literature on the subject. Doane, he defined the problem, detailed a procedure for learning, and described the ideal result.

Doane asserted, "It is not so easy a matter to read well as most people imagine. . . . There are multitudes who can read women words true, can speak every word most correctly, and pronounce the single or united syllables perfectly well, yet who are not capable of reading six lines together with their proper accent, and a graceful turn of voice, either to inform or to please the hearer."²¹ Thus this difficulty was compounded by indifference and an unwarmed spirit, Doane was the first to propose to "learn the art of reading by the glance of an eye, as

²⁰ Barnett, Diocesan's Instruction, p. 215.

²¹ Ibid., p. 215.

as never to interrupt the flow of their argument, nor the vivacity and pathos of their presentation."²² Failure to meet this challenge, he said, left congregations "not from January to December, engrossed and unmoved."²³

To teach the art of reading, and especially "to improve the knowledge of persons advanced beyond children," Watts wrote The Art of Reading and Writing English. While he mentioned suggestions for effective reading through his other books, this textbook presented a detailed procedure for improvement. In the first fourteen chapters he presented his views concerning the nature, sounds, and arrangements of letters and syllables into words, as well as directions for the use of quantity, accent, and punctuation.²⁴ Upon this foundation he built a chapter entitled "Directions for Reading." These included the correct pronunciation of individual words; lessons adapted to the young person's skills according to the punctuation; and stress and tone related to the sense of the material. Exhortation of those who read well and practice before a capable critic were strongly advocated. Silent reading was considered an unwelcome gain. In the following chapter entitled, "Of the English, or Jewish Method Belong to Some Special Kind of Words in a Sentence," he defended the strictness of his explanation by asserting, "If these rules are not observed in reading, the speech of the finest writer, with all the natural ornaments of eloquence, will become flat

²²Watts, "Religious Services," Watts, IV, 34.

²³Watts, "Art of Reading and Writing English," Watts, IV, 473-477.

and drill, and drilling, and have not power to charm or persuade.²⁴

Emphasis, he said, might be achieved mechanically by pronouncing the emphatical word "with a peculiar strength of voice above the rest." To do this well, he urged, one must observe equal cautions against singularity of voice or multiplicity of tones, and against adding or subtracting proper stress.²⁵

Without discounting the practicality of such rules, greater emphasis must be given Voss's ideal of "useful and effective" reading. Ideally, he declared, proper reading must conform to the natural standards of good speaking.

Voss's contemporary and friend, John Ruskin, has long been credited with the much-quoted statement which formed the basis of the so-called "natural" method of elocution:

In reading take notice to your subject, and deliver it just in such a manner as you would do if you were talking of it. This is the great, general and most important Rule of all; which if carefully observed, will correct not only this but almost all the other faults of a bad Pronunciation; and give you an easy, distinct, graceful delivery, agreeable to all the Rules of a right Elocution. For however apt we are to transgress them in reading, we follow them naturally and easily enough in Conversation. and children will tell a story with all the natural Ornaments and Beauties of Pronunciation; however, awkwardly they may read the same sort of a Book.²⁶

It has been ignored, however, that Ruskin drew upon Voss as an authority for the principle by adding this quotation from Voss:

²⁴ ibid., p. 711.

²⁵ ibid.

²⁶ John Ruskin, An Essay on Elocution, or Pronunciation (London, 1845), pp. 20-21.

Let the tone and force of your voice in preaching be the same as in its speaking; and do not affect to change that natural and easy sound wherewith you speak, for a strange, low, affected tone, as soon as they begin to preach, which would almost persuade our ears, that the speaker and the hearer were the different persons, if our eyes did not tell us the contrary.⁵¹

To Watts, as to Blake, then, reading should be as natural as speaking—correct, unobtrusible, and as affecting as the cause demanded. The importance of the subject matter and aim of Christian preaching required, in his estimation, that if anyone were to be read, this was the goal toward which the sincere preacher must strive.

The Rhetorical Aspect

Even at its best, Watts only tolerated the poet manner. He advocated an extempore delivery by which preachers "speak to [their] hearers with freedom," and by which the Holy Spirit might impart new inspiration during the act of preaching.⁵² To encourage this "freedom" in the pulpit he defined the elements of extempore delivery and presented practical helps toward achieving them.

The Personal Elements

Three factors, Watts said, were involved in the preaching situation: the preacher, the Holy Spirit, and the hearer. The first, the preacher, was the living channel by which the second, the Spirit of God, spoke to the third, united.

⁵¹Watts, "Art of Reading and Writing English," *Works*, IV, 698.

⁵²Watts, "On Public Attention," *Works*, III, 36.

To Votie, the preacher's delivery must, first of all, be vitally alive. "A dull preacher," he declared, "takes a dreary church."²⁹ This obligation required a conscious arrival in the preacher himself. Votie challenged parsons: "Enter the pulpit with the exuberance of holy joy, that you have an opportunity to speak for the glory of God, and the salvation of men. . . . Stir up yourself to the work with sacred vigour, that the assembly may feel that you speak."³⁰ In another place he said, "Let us rouse our souls with all holy fervour to fulfill our ministry, for it will be a dreadful reproach upon us . . . if we let the name of Christ and godliness die under our hands for want of a lively soul, and pious fervour and faithfulness in our ministrations."³¹

The vital enlivening of the preacher's power was, however, to be an ever continued struggle. Votie founded that this vigor be harnessed to practical ends. First, when the power was used to preach the doctrine of the gospel, Votie declared that the preacher varied his "words in vain declamations." The ardent preacher must use his spiritual insight "to distinguish the different characters of sinners and sinners."³² He must use his reasoning to lead his "hearers wisely into the knowledge of the truth, and teach them to build their faith upon solid grounds." His experience in life situations must be employed to illustrate that "religion is an impractical thing"; his personal religious passions "to kindle the soul to soul in the holy warfare, and to make it heavenly

²⁹ibid., p. 27.

³⁰ibid.

³¹ibid., p. 28.

³²ibid., p. 28.

victorious over all the enemies of its salvation."¹¹ In short, Watts believed that all the preacher's powers were deliberately to be set aglow for the purpose of kindling a flame in the lives of his hearers.

Never did Watts deny, however, that such personal arduousness secured the necessity for thorough preparation. Meditation, fasting, and the ruminating of Scriptures should, he urged, be continued throughout the entire week, until the substance of the sermon was "thought into heart and head by review and meditation."¹² To him, the freedom from notes or manuscript obtained by such preparation was an essential of "good" preaching. Thus, for example, he declared *preparing* to be "a great art, and a worthy minister." "His discourses are well formed, his sentiments on almost every subject are just and proper, his style is solemn and not capricious, nor does he vitiously neglect the pastoral." But, Watts concluded, "I cannot call him a good preacher, for he does not only use his written notes to secure his method, and to relieve his memory, which is a very proper and useful practice, but he never even takes his eyes off his book to address himself with life and spirit to the people."¹³ Thorough preparation, in his view, involved not only careful inspection of material, but also the mastery so that "you may have it at command, and speak to your hearers with freedom."¹⁴ By the combination of personal arduous and accurate preparation, Watts believed

¹¹Ibid., pp. 12, 16.

¹²Ibid., p. 30.

¹³Watts, "Salutary Sermon," ibid., IV, 341.

¹⁴Watts, "An Noble Attempt," ibid., III, 35.

a preacher might obtain the ideal delivery. In his English Journal he described what this delivery was like.

Deliver your discourses to the people like a man that is talking to them in good earnest about their most important concerns, and their everlasting welfare; like a messenger sent from heaven who would die upon almost any gall, and whose souls he had not happiness.

.....
 But let all the earnest soul for God, and compassion for perishing sin, animate your voice and countenance; and let the people see and feel, as well as hear, that you are speaking to them about things of infinite moment, and in which your own eternal interest lies as well as theirs.³⁷

In addition to "human" preparation, the preacher was stimulated to seek divine assistance upon the Holy Spirit. Watts believed such divine assistance was given not only in the tranquility of the study but also in the godly excitement of the act of preaching. Hence, to limit the discourse to pre-composed words was to close out this source of illumination. "If you pray and hope for the assistance of the Spirit of God in every part of your work," he said, "he will render always to confirm yourself previously to the more words and sentences which you have written down in your private preparations."³⁸ Thorough preparation was, however, an essential prerequisite for divine assistance. He asked, "And how can we think the Spirit of God will come to our assistance, if our spirits withdraw and are absent from the work?"³⁹ The extent of human preparation must be added to the will of the spirit.

Watts believed that the third and final element in effective delivery related to the hearers. As preparation was the key to securing the aid of the Holy Spirit, so "adaptation" was the key to appealing to

the people. In Veltie's judgment, people could be persuaded only by a delivery adapted to their nature and capacity. In fact, his entire approach to the preaching situation was controlled by his conception of human nature. In abbreviated statements:

Remember that you have to do with the understanding, reason and memory of men, with the heart and conscience, with the will and affections; and therefore you must use every method of speech which may be most proper to engage and employ each of those faculties, or powers of human nature, in the aids of religion, and in the testimony of God and the gospel.⁴⁰

In order to promote understanding, Veltie suggested, "let your voice be more slow, and pronounce every word very distinctly."⁴¹ To arouse the passions, on the other hand, one should affect a "strong and passionate" pronunciation, with the voice a little higher than usual and the accent more varied.⁴²

Veltie was hardly aware of the differences in human understanding resulting from age, education, or station in life.⁴³ To achieve uniform effectiveness he considered it necessary to "use such a way of speaking, as may be most natural and easy to be understood, and most agreeable to those that join with you."⁴⁴

⁴⁰ibid.

⁴¹Veltie, "Art of Preaching and Writing English," Works, IV, 403.

⁴²ibid., pp. 402-403.

⁴³Veltie, "An Historic Attempt," Works, III, 27.

⁴⁴Veltie, "A Guide to Prayer," Works, III, 145.

The Functional Elements

In addition to these general considerations, Wells was concerned with the proper functioning of the mechanical elements of effective delivery. Neither voice nor gesture escaped his attention.

All the characteristics of sound--time, intensity, pitch, and quality--he related to proper speech. Time, for example, was considered important to presentation, thought response, and emotional suggestion. He warned, "Take heed of hurrying your words or syllables over to length, lest thereby you are led to fluttering, or stuttering, in speaking or reading."⁴⁵ While he warned "to make no stops where the sense admits of none," a properly timed pause concerned with the speaker's thought was of double value: "This will afford you time to breathe, in the delivery of your discourse, and give your hearers a short season for recollection of the particulars which have been mentioned before."⁴⁶ Moreover, he related time to emotional expression thus to advise:

Where the sense is grave and solemn, especially if it be in the way of instruction, or amplifying any point of difficulty, let your voice be more slow, and pronounce every word very distinctly; but where the subject is more lively, easy, and pleasing matter, let your pronunciation be a little more speedy.⁴⁷

To Wells, intensity had two important functions: to make speech suitable and to achieve emphasis. He advanced the general principle that

⁴⁵Wells, "Art of Reading and Writing English," English, IV, 495.

⁴⁶Wells, "On Rhetoric Attempt," English, III, 25.

⁴⁷Wells, "Art of Reading and Writing English," English, IV, 495.

the "voice should be such as may give a clear and distinct sound of every syllable to those who mark time." More specifically, he recommended that "children . . . be taught to let their voice in reading be so loud, as that everyone in the same room may hear and understand; but not loud enough to reach the next room, if the doors be shut."⁴⁰ In describing "euphonia" he initially used the word "strength," but he also indicated that "tone" could be used for the same purpose.⁴¹

The "tone" of the voice was of deep concern to Wells. He warned against "Yachtish and self-pleasing tones," or a "strange, new cultured tone." He advocated softness and ease, so that "the tone and sound of your voice in reading be the same as it is in speaking."⁴² In the art of preaching he urged directness and earnestness--as he said, "talking to them in good earnest."⁴³ "Heavy and unpleasant tones," he declared, "should be banished from divine worship."⁴⁴

Wells also recognized that "some persons, by nature, have a very sweet and beautiful voice, so that whatsoever they speak appears pleasing." Those less fortunate in native equipment, he said, should "take much more pains, and attend with diligence to voice and diction, that their voice may be forced to an agreeable pronunciation." In doing so, however, it should be remembered that an individual's "own native and common voice appears most natural, and may be managed with greatest ease."⁴⁵

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 491.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 700-701.

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 490-491.

⁴³ Wells, "An English Accents," *ibid.*, III, 178.

⁴⁴ Wells, "A Guide to Preaching," *ibid.*, III, 178.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 147-150.

White dealt more fully with the use of gestures in prayer than in preaching. In both, however, he set the same principles applying, save "that in the case of preaching, the same restrictions are not always necessary, and especially in applying truth merely to the conscience."²⁴ The basic principle was that the preacher should "stick to the simplicity of nature which refuses disguise and the principle and example of the gospel system."²⁵ In natural gestures against being "more statues and lifeless engines," he considered "voluntariness and quietness, and a simplicity of posture . . . more devout than violent gestures and mechanical movements."²⁶ However, he declared, "In the face, the feet of nature hath written various indications of the temper of the mind and especially when it is moved by any great emotion."²⁷

Any movement which could be termed "a gesture of nature" was acceptable to White. Thus he justified a common gesture in prayer by declaring:

The elevation of the eyes and hands is as much the dictate of nature in all acts of worship wherein we address God, that the nations themselves frequently practiced it, as we have an account in their several writers, as well as we find it mentioned as the practice of the saints in the holy scriptures. And as the elevation of the hands to heaven is a very natural posture when a person prays for himself as when a superior prays for a blessing he descends upon a person or an inferior creature, it is very natural to lay his hand upon the head of the person for whom he prays. This we find practiced from the beginning of the world, and the practice descends throughout all ages.²⁸

²⁴ *WHL*, 2: 127.

²⁵ *WHL*, 2: 127.

²⁶ *WHL*, 2: 128.

²⁷ *WHL*, 2: 127.

To master proper voice and gesture, Valla further recommended the study of books on elocution, imitation of the best preachers, and avoidance of what is found offensive in others.⁵⁸

Not only voice and gesture but also the use of notes received special attention in Valla's theory of effective delivery. First, he considered a preacher's use of "written notes to secure his method, and to relieve his memory . . . a very proper and useful practice."⁵⁹ This, however, was a goal to be achieved rather than a method to adopt at the outset. For the beginning pastor he advocated writing out the entire sermon. After a time only short sketches and general heads were to be composed. By degrees notes would be reduced.⁶⁰ "Take care fully in the formation of your sermon in younger years," he said. "A habit of thinking and speaking well, procured by the study of youth, will save the labour of your middle age men."⁶¹ At all times in this process, however, written material was to be used only to relieve, never to replace, the function of memory. The substance of the sermon must be mastered until it was sufficiently at the preacher's command to allow freedom and distinctness of delivery. Such a theory of sermon delivery, of course, begins with the popular manuscript method of Villanovani and

⁵⁸Valla, "An Orator's Attempt," *Epilog.*, III, 3.

⁵⁹Valla, "Intrigues of Fortune," *Epilog.*, IV, 34.

⁶⁰Valla, "A Talk to Prayer," *Epilog.*, III, 19.

⁶¹Valla, "An Orator's Attempt," *Epilog.*, III, 35-36.

overlaid to the extempore style of Isenet.⁶⁰ In this respect, Watts's "testimony and his writings form a link between the end of the seventeenth and the renewed end of the later eighteenth century."⁶¹

Conclusion

Watts's contribution to delivery was made in a period of transition in English preaching. The extempore sermon was invading the almost universal practice of reading. An evangelical dependence upon immediate inspiration from the Holy Spirit was replacing rigid confinement to a written manuscript.

First, Watts attempted to improve the art of reading. The rules he produced were sound and practical. More important, however, was his strong emphasis upon naturalness—the doctrine that one's tone in the reading should be the same as in speaking.

Watts's second emphasis in delivery centered in his advocacy of the extempore sermon. In his view, extempore delivery required an aroused preacher, left room for divine assistance, and produced an aroused congregation. At the same time, he advocated a high degree of self control on the part of the preacher. His directions included thinking guided by thought, emphasis adapted to meaning, tone trained to naturalness. Gestures, too, were to be controlled by nature. Delivery

⁶⁰William Howard Bartpole Lecky, *A History of England in the Eighteenth Century* (4 vols.; New York, 1891), II, 505.

⁶¹Marie Anne Fieubillon, *Jonathan Swift as English Preacher in the Eighteenth Century* (4 vols.; New York, 1911), II, 335.

was related to memory and action in order to enable the speaker to recall the message and the hearer to receive it.

Wells recognized that each preacher was an individual and must respect his own personality. While he advocated imitation as well as practice, his observations were not mechanical. The values of imitation were to be derived not from copying of one master, but from a critical study of many preachers of demonstrated ability. His emphasis upon individuality was indicated by the statement that "the rules [for observation] are each better derived from books written on this subject, from an observation of the best preachers, in order to imitate them, and an avoidance of that which we find offensive when we are learners."¹⁴

Wells's real criteria for good delivery lay in the elements of a complete act of communication. Delivery was properly the medium by which truth was transmitted and received.

To Wells, a sermon was more than a mass of spoken words; it was the outflow of the animated life of the preacher himself. His basic criticism of the real sermon centered in the fact that it only weakly expressed the vitality of the preacher's soul. He exhorted his fellow ministers, "In say our hearts and our lips join to proclaim this redemption. . . . let our eyes speak the fact . . . and let our language make it appear that we speak what we feel."¹⁵ The advantage of extemporaneous preaching was that it allowed the preacher's past thought and present

¹⁴Wells, "An Outline Sketch," *op. cit.*, III, 11.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, III, 17-18.

expedient to flow out to his hearers.⁶⁶

Equally important was the reception of the message by the hearer. White's ultimate test for effectiveness was audience response.⁶⁷ Was the understanding improved? Were the passions quickened? Was the will persuaded? Did the message revivify the message? Did the message bring the souls of the hearers with new implications of character? These were the final criteria by which he evaluated the effectiveness of sermon delivery.

⁶⁶In his poem, "In the Memory of the Rev. Dr. Thomas George," White explained how the preacher's service might become an act of love and personality:

With pleasing horror we survey
The currents of the loath,
Where the better's bottom lay,
And shed a sweet revival.
Hail! the old earthquake came again
To George's voice, and breaks the chain
Of heavy death, and rends the banner
The rising host he comes, he comes,
With throngs of willing soldiers, a long
triumphing train.

White, "Sweet Ignorance," *Signs*, IV, 301-302.

⁶⁷White, "The Improvement of the Mind," *Signs*, V, 364-372.

CHAPTER VIII

ALBERT IN PRISON

Introduction

While now the bulk of mankind engaged in a blind pursuit of perishing wealth, intoxicated with pleasure and the golden dream of duty. To him, they were oblivious of the facts of "a dying world, and durable losses."

Light reigns thro' worlds above, and life with all her springs;
Yet men live grow'ling on the earth,
The soul forgets the heavenly birth,
Her senses her walls throng, and heavenward turn her wings.¹

To this blind bulk of humanity, preachers, he believed, were God's real spokesmen—"Light upon a hill in this sinful world . . . stands in his right hand." Their holy mission was to persuade men to accept God's offer of salvation and thus to enlarge God's Kingdom.² Preachers of the gospel, declared White, have the express task of persuading

To address all the ranks of mankind, the high and low, the wise and the foolish, the sober and the vain, and persuade them all to pursue and persevere in virtue with regard to themselves, in justice and goodness with regard to their neighbors, and piety towards God. These are attitudes of everlasting importance, and most of the persons to whom these addresses are made, are not wise and skillful judged, but are influenced and drawn strongly to the contrary side by their own sinful appetites and passions, and misled or blinded by the corrupt customs of the world.

¹White, "Concepts of Time," *Works*, IV, 673.

²White, "An Ambler Attempt," *Works*, III, 31.

There is therefore a necessity not only of a clear and faithful representation of things to us, in order to exercise their reason and judgment, but of all the skill and force of persuasion addressed to the passions.¹

Thus recognizing appeal to the reason and address to the passions as the two basic elements in persuasion, Watts provided to analyze each and to describe its role in the persuasive process.

Reason: A Rational Power

Reason, ever a basic element in persuasion, was given increased importance in Watts's view, because of the eighteenth century emphasis on rationalism.² The authority of reason, as Haysbick has said, then challenged all else.³ In the task of harnessing reason for preaching, Watts developed a doctrine of reason which described it both as a human faculty and as a logical function.

Reason as a Human Faculty

By reason, Watts referred specifically to "that faculty or power of the mind, by which we discern and judge of right and wrong, of good and evil, of truth and error, and the like."⁴ He admitted great inequality among individuals, both in native capacity and in the proper use of this power.⁵ On the other hand, he stated, "We should not re-

¹Watts, "The Improvement of the Mind," *Essays*, V, 303.

²E. A. Haysbick, *A Postscript of the History of Preaching* (Oxford: New York, 1960), II, 373-374.

³Frederick, *Religious Enlightenment*, 2: 174.

⁴Watts, "Thought and Volition," *Essays*, II, 321.

⁵Watts, "Religious Formation," *Essays*, IV, 476.

suppose there are many other minds as happily turned as our own, and of superior size and more divine temper?" Such variations among men were, he thought, chiefly the result of differences in training. By training, and by training only, could reason be brought into the proper function in life relationships. Then properly disciplined by art, reason made possible the acquisition of knowledge in science, advancement in culture, and a proper government of practical affairs.¹

In White's view also, the faculty of reason bore especially heavy responsibilities in judging religious truth. It aided in evaluating divine authority, discovering the true meaning of the text of the Bible, and deciding the conformity of particular propositions to the general revelation of God's work. For this reason, it was essential that the preacher appeal to this faculty. "When you have to do with reasonable creatures in your sacred work," he taught, "let your manner of speaking be rational, and your arguments and inferences just and strong."²

Trained as a Logical Function

The exercise of the faculty of reason White called "reasoning." He believed the right use of this "common gift of God to all men" was necessary both in the realm of knowledge and in that of moral action.³ When trained by the principles and rules of logic, reasoning became a dependable tool, guiding "inquiries after truth, and the communication

¹White, "Logic," *Logic*, V, 3.

²White, "In Sacred Discourse," *Logic*, III, 14.

³White, "Logic," *Logic*, V, 7.

of it to others.¹¹

Wells often reiterated the importance of training the reasoning faculty. He admitted that "without education it is very rude and glazy, and ever understanding later fully and mature."¹² Wells children, he said, must single reason with respect for authority.¹³ However, the formal training of this faculty was a spiritual as well as a secular essential.

In addition to training in reasoning, however, Wells felt that another safeguard of faith was to provide, namely, the truths of Bible revelation. To Wells there was a basic realism in reason or in revelation when standing alone. The location, though in possession of the faculty of reason, was led astray because he was supplied by revelation.¹⁴ This was because the fall of man had rendered reason so defective that "it has not been found itself practically sufficient to direct us in all things that relate to salvation."¹⁵ On the other hand, "since the revelations of God to man have been so very early and various, and have been delivered to us by different persons, and in different ages," reason was required to evaluate the consistencies and inconsistencies among them.¹⁶ Reason and revelation could not, therefore, be

¹¹Wells, 2- 3.

¹²Wells, "Strength and Weakness," *Evangelist*, II, 203.

¹³Wells, "A Guide to Progress," *Evangelist*, III, 196.

¹⁴Wells, "Strength and Weakness," *Evangelist*, II, 203.

¹⁵Wells, "Unity and Harmony of Religion," *Evangelist*, VI, 64.

¹⁶Wells, 2- 30.

directed.¹⁷ Sound religion should be built on a reasonable foundation.¹⁸

Heide urged preachers to furnish this basis of reasoned knowledge to their people:

Let them first know why they are christians, that they may be firmly established in the belief and profession of the religion of Christ; that they may be guarded against all the assaults of temptation and infidelity in this evil day, and may be able to render a reason of the hope that is in them; furnish them with arguments in opposition to the rude scolds and blasphemers which are frequently thrown out in the world against the name and doctrines of the holy Jesus.¹⁹

In fact, to Heide, reason was of unquestionable importance. No preacher could afford to ignore its powers and limitations, its certainties and its dangers, its training and its improvement. This necessary current of religion must be guarded both by the art of logic and by the light of revelation if it was to perform the proper and necessary function as a reliable judge.

Heide Preacher as Persuader

As Heide considered reason a universal though variable human faculty, regarding the double discipline of logic and revelation to fulfill its duties, as he insisted that appeal to reason was primary in any attempt at persuasion.

Heide as Persuader— In discussing rhetoric as "the art of persuasion," Heide asserted that the "understanding . . . ought to be first

¹⁷Heide, "Theological Discourses on Several Subjects," *Works*, I, 493.

¹⁸Heide, "A Cursed Age's Infidelity," *Works*, IV, 70.

¹⁹Heide, "An Heide Sermon," *Works*, III, 15.

controlled, by the plainest and strongest form of reasoning.²⁰ "The understanding, which perceives the fitness or unfitness, good or evil, of things, should be a director or guide to the other power which is active, viz. the will."²¹ Ideally, therefore, reason would control man's conduct by controlling his will.²²

In actual life, however, two factors militated against reason's rule. First, White said, "In some cases the will determines the man's action in a very sovereign manner . . . and without a reason borrowed from the understanding."²³ Second, "passions and aversions, etc. are so great and numerous, that not one [man] in ten thousand will employ his natural reason in the best way."²⁴

For rhetoric is general, then, White saw reason as primary, but in itself insufficient to move the will.

Preaching in Parliament. While this worked, White insisted on a strong appeal to reason in preaching. To him, logical principles guided the preacher in the invention and disposition of preaching material, the rational direction of his hearers determined his method of presentation, and the necessity of infusing the understanding to insure spiritual stability controlled his intellectual and emotional appeals.

²⁰White, "The Improvement of the Mind," *Works*, V, 243.

²¹White, "An Essay on the Freedom of Will in God and in Creatures," *Works*, VI, 250.

²²*Ibid.*, p. 250.

²³White, "Strength and Weakness," *Works*, II, 284.

Wells said to the preacher, unequivocally, "Your first business is with the understanding, to take even the lower parts of your understanding know what you mean."²⁴ Only when this had been accomplished could a preacher lead his "hearers wisely into the knowledge of the truth, and teach them to build their faith upon solid grounds."²⁵

But not only must address be the reason upon a reason. Wells considered it as necessary throughout the discourse. "The word of God," he added, "will furnish you, with a rich variety of facts both to prove and to persuade."²⁶

At the same time, Wells warned against long and involved arguments. He declared, "Discourses in the pulpit, for the most part, should be short and easy, that they may strike conviction into the mind almost as soon as they strike the ear." Arguments should be derived from "familiar and well-known principles."²⁷ Truths should be "clear and well-chosen. . . ."²⁸ To prove the judgment and "plunge the heart with more quickly and powerful conviction," Wells urged the use of plain scriptural proofs. Such proofs carried the greatest weight, Wells contended, "both to convince and to persuade."²⁹

While fulfilled prophecy and miracle were useful as apologetics, "renewing and the language of scripture" were, thought Wells, more ever-lasting. "People," he said, "attend with holy reverence and affection

²⁴Wells, "On Wells's Approach," *ibid.*, III, 83.

²⁵*Ibid.*, p. 85.

²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 85.

²⁷*Ibid.*, p. 87.

²⁸*Ibid.*

²⁹*Ibid.*

as such a mediator, whose strongest argument both in points of doctrine and practice is that with the Lord.³⁰

Formulating his emphasis on the primacy of reason, not Watts's rationalized morality concerning the distinctions. Reason standing alone he compared "to the stone in a winter midnight, bright and shining, but very cold; or rather to the meteor which is called a shooting-star, which vanishes quickly, and is lost in darkness." Salvation must be an emotional experience, and not merely an intellectual agreement. Assent was superficial when compelled by proof alone. "If all this knowledge make an impression on the affections, it is not likely to slide with us, nor to do us much good," he declared.³¹ "Proble reason," then, must have assistance in order to effect persuasion. At one point Watts mentioned, "A more exertion of the reason and judgment, by the strongest arguments, is hardly sufficient to matters of piety and virtue, to convert the will into obedience."³² In another place he declared, "Reason is but like the back door, or some secret avenue, and seldom opened to let in any assistance."³³

The Passions

To the subject of the passions, Watts gave much attention. Not

³⁰Watts, p. 26.

³¹Watts, "Discourses on the Love of God," *ibid.*, II, 275.

³²Watts, "On Watts's Attempt," *ibid.*, III, 25.

³³Watts, "Religious Aversion," *ibid.*, IV, 77.

only their role in perception, but also their relation to personal feelings and plans living challenged him.

Turned to a Human Power

In his Logic Welle gave two definitions: (1) "Passions signify the various affections of the soul, such as attraction, love, or hatred."³⁵ (2) "Passion is . . . a sensation of some special sensation in animal nature, occasioned by the soul's perception of some object suited to excite that sensation."³⁶ In his later Theories of the Passions he altered his definition to this statement:

The name of passion seems to have been given originally to those affections of human nature, either from the impressions or sensations which the animal power receives by the soul's perception of that object which excites the passion, or from the impression or sensation which the soul receives by this operation of the animal power, or perhaps from both these, as the subject will be afterwards explained.³⁷

Welle was unable to distinguish "how far the animal nature and how far the mind or spirit, are concerned in producing [the] passions." In his conclusion, however, that physical reactions—"ferments," "regulation," "nervous alterations," etc.—were connected with them.³⁸ Intellectual efforts of the passions were, he argued, easily noticed. "For most of the passions have some effects on the colour or features of the countenance, and especially on the eyes, and discover themselves by gestures or voices, or other outward signs."³⁹

³⁵Welle, "Logic," Logic, I, 76.

³⁶Welle, "Theories of the Passions," Logic, II, 351.

³⁷Ibid., p. 361.

³⁸Ibid., p. 361.

Because of man's fallen nature, the passions, while thought, were naturally devoted to evil. At the same time, however, they were also capable of capture for God. "Thus divine grace both . . . employed them on the side of God and religion, it is like seizing the reins of the enemy from their old master . . . to make war upon the devil and all his army."³⁸

Nietzsche's purpose was to utilize the passions on the side of religion, "Reason and religion," he said, "teach us to regulate and govern our passions wisely, but not to crush and abolish them."³⁹ While he admitted that the passions were incapable of performing reason's office of judgment, he contended they were invaluable in promoting the decisions of the mind and will. After reason had chosen the good and true, the passions aroused man to action. The passions, "those lively, warm, and vigorous principles and powers in our nature," were the speediest messenger "to pursue the good, and avoid the evil . . . with vastly greater speed and diligence" than reason could expect.⁴⁰

David as Dynamic Forces

Proceeding upon this general philosophy, Nietzsche analyzed the passions as dynamic human powers. He divided them into three zones.⁴¹ The first included attraction, love, and hatred; the second, the variations of love and hatred in terms of their objects--renewal, contempt, delight,

³⁸Nietzsche, "Meditations on the Love of God," *Ecce Homo*, II, 60b.

³⁹*Ibid.*, p. 60b.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, p. 60b.

⁴¹*Id.* George Campbell, *The Philosophy of Nietzsche* (New York, 1904), p. 12b.

distills, etc.; the third, "other derivatives of love and hatred" in terms of their objects--desire, avoidance, hope, fear, and the like.⁴² He believed all human passions could be classified under these three heads.

As a Utilist Watts argued that "the design of our Creator in sending the passions into our original constitution, was for the service both of our state and our nation."⁴³ Fear, for example, protects the body; abstinence from the stimulating nerve softens the heart; joy shows the spirit's cooperation with the good. Complicating the picture, however, was the fact that the passions were influenced by natural constitution, age, season of the year, health, employment, social state, state, contagion of custom in others, physical environment, nationality, and nervous disease.⁴⁴

Watts was specific, Watts listed certain characteristics of the passions. Most as well as objects, he said, serve to arouse them. The passions themselves fix or distract attention, deep or soothe judgment, and prompt eloquence. Persons who follow the dictates of their passions usually judge stubbornly but seldom correctly, for they are "blind and deaf to all circumstances and reasonings" but those which soothe their opinions. This danger was further increased, he asserted, by the power of several passions to "give a natural eloquence to those

⁴²Watts, "Derivatives of the Passions," *Essay*, II, 278.

⁴³*Ibid.*, p. 408.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, p. 401.

she knew not any rules of art.⁴⁵ As a preacher, Watts was anxious to enlist these powers in the service of religion.⁴⁶

Thought as Essential to Persuasion.

When the speaker's design extended to persuasion, Watts considered the excitation of the passions as essential. Especially was this the case in preaching.

System, in General. In theory, Watts listed three steps in persuasion:

1. Conveying the sense of the speaker to the understanding of the hearers in the clearest and most intelligent manner, by the plainest expressions and the most lively and striking representations of it, so that the mind may be thoroughly convinced of the thing proposed. 2. Persuading the will affectually to choose or refuse the thing suggested and represented. 3. Relating the passions in the most vivid and forcible manner, so as to act all the soul and every power of nature at work to pursue or avoid the thing in debate.⁴⁷

In actual practice, such a proper order was, he confessed, not always followed. Most hearers were "influenced and strongly drawn . . . by their own sinful appetites and passions."⁴⁸ In order to restoring the priority of reason, Watts devoted an entire section in his logic to "Of Judgment and Propagation."⁴⁹ He warned repeatedly that when

⁴⁵Watts, pp. 379-380.

⁴⁶Watts, "A Guide to Preaching," Watts, III, 138.

⁴⁷Watts, "The Improvement of the Mind," Watts, I, 158.

⁴⁸Watts, p. 113.

⁴⁹Watts, "Logic," Watts, I, 73-137.

the passions were not only available judges but positive sources of sense, both hearer and speaker should be careful to evaluate emotional responses. "Reason," he asserted, "confines our thoughts only to one side of the question."⁵⁰ The task of the state, however, was to judge rightly--"Consider with an impartial view, all the properties and circumstances of any object, and attend to all the reasonings that belong to it, both on one side and on the other."⁵¹

Because of this tendency of the passions to bias one's view of a matter, Watts feared the influence of those powers. In courts of justice he would exclude all appeals to the passions and limit plans to reason alone. In the other hand, as we have already said, he asserted that human passions were divinely designed for the betterment of life. That was required was their direction to reason. That as controlled "these violent powers of nature" eased difficulties, relieved fatigue, rendered conduct useful, heightened virtue, and tended to promote happy personal relationships.⁵²

Reasoning in Particular. In the work of proving in particular, the use of the passions was vindicated, Watts believed, by divine example. He referred to the language of the prophets and the apostles. These not only revealed truths beyond the discovery of reason, but also, in order to effect persuasion, "sandy and powerfully" appealed "to the affectionate principles within us."⁵³ Watts justified such appeals on the

⁵⁰Watts, "Dissertation of the Passions," ibid., II, 605.

⁵¹ibid.

⁵²ibid., pp. 379-380.

⁵³ibid., p. 671.

basis of man's need. He declared that God knows our nature and "the design and use" of the passions.³⁵ Therefore, as God created the Bible preacher to appeal to the passions, so also should gospel preachers make the same appeal. Watts cited not only the prophets but Christ himself as an example of the use of emotional appeals, and concluded, "Happily preachers, the approach this divine pattern!" He added concerning these scriptural examples, "Is it not all with a design to strike the soul of man in the most passionate points, and spread vital religion through the inner recesses of the heart!"³⁷

Appeal to the passions was also indicated, he thought, by the relationship between preacher and hearer. Both were sinners, capable of a common salvation and service. In a single meeting of minds must be added a meeting of hearts in the gospel experience. Watts considered a preacher as, first of all, a man. Thus he was experienced him as a man and gave as a Christian. From the standpoint of his own experience he could appeal to his hearer. "The will," he explained, "is such a faculty suited to set the passions of hell, the will of sin, and the riches of divine grace, in Christ Jesus, before the eyes of sinful men, who have the same natural passions with himself."³⁶

On the negative side, Watts emphasized that the passions were not all judges of truth or virtue. "The passions were made to be servants to reason, to be governed by the judgment and to be influenced by truth; but they were never given us to decide controversies, and to determine

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 673.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 673.

that is truth, and that is error."⁵⁷

Again, the earnest of the passion was not to be viewed as an end in itself. The passion was "not merely for the sensible pleasure of human nature, but to give it vigor and power for useful actions."⁵⁸ For these reasons Watts declared, "as it is the business of a preacher to assist in the devout passion, so it is part of his work to guard his hearers against the abuse of them."⁵⁹

One final principle involving both positive and negative elements was clearly stated by Watts. "The preacher should be an example to the hearers, and then he preaches with most power and success."⁶⁰ In the principle that both began there, he challenged his fellow preachers to make themselves fit order to make others:

The careless and indolent in a whole assembly, when the preacher appears like a lifeline rising, presenting words of love or grace! When he speaks of divine things in such a way, as such a cold and formal manner, as though they said no influence on his own heart! When the words freeze upon his lips, the hearts of hearers are freezing also! But where we find devout affection mingled with solid argument in the discourse, those the lips of the preacher seem to speak light and life at once, and to help to communicate the holy passion all around him, by feeling it first himself.⁶¹

In addition to the admonition to appeal to reason first and the passion second, Watts repeatedly applied the following principles as practical directives concerning persuasion. First, gospel preachers should "read the writings of the holy prophets . . . and make them

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 474. ⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 474. ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 474.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 473-474. ⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 471-474.

their pattern.⁴² The prophets preached, "the boundless service of God . . . in all the possible language of tenderness, as though to each man of flesh and blood as we are."⁴³ Second, gospel preachers should fill their sermons with word pictures. "When you would describe any . . . virtues of life, set yourself to display the beauties and excellencies of them, in their own agreeable and lovely form and colour."⁴⁴ Third, gospel preachers should arouse themselves as well as arouse others. "O let us stir up our hearts . . . and strive mightily in prayer and preaching to revive the work of God."⁴⁵ Persuasion is inseparable without personal enthusiasm. Fourth, gospel preachers should use all of the vehicles afforded by speech and language in order to arouse their listeners.

Further in Persuasive Preaching

In addition to describing the general offices of reason and passion in persuasion, Watts considered other more specific factors relating to persuasive discourse. Among these two were of especial importance to the preacher: *propulsion* and the *force of personality*.

The Influence of Propulsion

By propulsion Watts referred to "some particular opinion [that] has possessed the mind, and engaged the affections, without sufficient

⁴² *ibid.*, pp. 473-474.

⁴³ *ibid.*

⁴⁴ *ibid.*, "An Noble Attempt," *ibid.*, III, 24.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, p. 37.

ought to release of the truth of it.⁶⁶ Realizing that prejudices are many and varied, he ought to discover "their springs of error" and to protect the mind from them. His analysis divided prejudices into those arising from "things," from words, from customs, and from other persons.

"Things" produce prejudices by obscurity, false appearance, mixed qualities, varied views, and casual associations.⁶⁷ Words also tend singly produce prejudices by inflectionism and equivocation; and they tend in conjunction, by stylistic characterizing and loose descriptions. Other people produce prejudices in us by family education, demands of fashion, veneration of authority, and reaction to the manner of presentation.

To persuade men who are prejudiced required, faith believed, reason, activation, and the arousal of the passions.⁶⁸ One-level preaching directed to only one kind of man was inadequate to overcome the pervasive and penetrating prejudices of men. Effectiveness required preaching directed to all levels of human nature.

The Power of Preaching:

An important factor in evaluating preaching and in the whole work of persuasion was the preacher's personality and character. With this in mind the preacher to be aware of the ethical power of his own life as

⁶⁶Locke, "Logic," Opus, V, 37.

⁶⁷Opus, IV, 37-38.

⁶⁸Locke, "The Improvement of the Mind," Opus, V, 23.

an influence on the decisions of others. To him, the preacher was first a man of God and only secondly a ruler. Because his giving was organically related to the reception of his message, Hefie contended that the preacher must pattern in his own person what he proposed for his people.

Thus the personal religion of the preacher was essential to the effectiveness of his preaching. Hefie continued, "Take heed to your own personal religion, especially to the work of God in your own heart, as absolutely necessary to the right discharge of the ministerial work."⁶⁹ Not only would such personal faith uphold the pastor and fulfill his duty it also was a practical aid in preaching. Hefie wrote

You will speak with more divine compassion to wretched and perishing mortals; with more life and power to stupid sinners; with more sweetness and comfort to unburdened consciences, and with more useful language and influence to backsliding Christians. You will lively learn to preach more powerfully in all respects for the salvation of men, and talk more feelingly on every sacred subject, when the power, and grace, and life of Godliness are kept up in your own spirit. . . . You say that of proper solemn exercises, direct, and comfort others by the same words of light and power, of precept and promise, of joy and hope, which have exercised, directed and comforted you; a word coming from the heart will never reach the heart.⁷⁰

To this end, Hefie advocated temperance, holiness, benevolence, kindness, gravity, meekness, wisdom, self-control, compassion, and vigilance in conduct. To be an effective preacher, he urged, "Take heed to your whole conversation in the world; let that be managed not only as becomes a professor of Christianity, but as becomes a minister

⁶⁹Hefie, "An Noble Struggle," *ibid.*, III, 3.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, p. 5.

of the gospel of Christ.⁷¹ In another passage he said, "It behoves us well to remember, that a blasphe upon the name of a minister, arising from his own spiritual conduct, brings a foul and lasting scandal upon the office itself, and upon the gospel of our glorified Lord, in whose name we act. And he will not fail to resent it."⁷² As an example of this personal persuasive power, he spoke of the great preacher, John Howe, "I feel the attractive force of thy superior soul."⁷³ In sum, the preacher himself was his own greatest persuader.

Conclusion

It is evident that Watts held a well defined doctrine of the nature and use of logical, emotional, and ethical appeals in effective gospel preaching.

The primary appeal must be directed to the reason which, in his theory, was the distinctive mark of man. Watts agreed with the poor girl who said, "My soul is my throne," or as he explained, "whereby it is plain the soul her power of thinking."⁷⁴ In Watts, this faculty was man's only reliable judge. Aided by training and by the guidance of revelation, reason enabled man to apprehend truth and goodness.

The second appeal in persuasion must be made to the passions. In advancing this view Watts expressed a recently held doctrine. Some decades later James Burgh epitomized the necessity of emotional appeal.

⁷¹Watts, p. 11.

⁷²Watts, p. 11.

⁷³Watts, "Some Letters," *Watts*, IV, 407.

⁷⁴Watts, "Philosophical Essays," *Watts*, I, 317.

in these words:

Back to the field, which preaches has an evil one. For of mankind have able heads. All have abilities and all hearts may be touched, if the speaker is master of his art. The business is not so much, to open the understanding, as to open the heart. There are few, who do not have their duty. To allow time to the doing of it is the difficulty. For is this to be effected by cold reasoning.⁷³

So that the preacher might effectively utilize the passions, Watts defined and classified them, and, on this basis, related them to the work of preaching. The reason for this methodology, which was also followed by Burgh, is explained by John Walker, who declared, "A passion well described, disposes us to the feeling of it, and greatly assists us in expressing it with force and propriety: this shows the necessity of a good description of the passions and how much the art of speaking depends on it."⁷⁴

Clearly, Watts approved the use of emotional appeals in preaching. To him, a personally aroused preacher, using every appeal to the passions, was not a proper imitation of Scriptural examples. To ignore the passions was to fail in the purpose of preaching.

⁷³James Burgh, The Art of Speaking (London, Conn.: 1751), p. 33.

⁷⁴John Walker, Elements of Rhetorical Oratory, 1800, pp. 313-314.

CHAPTER II

ISAAC WATTS: EIGHTEENTH PREACHER

Introduction

Having given an exposition of Watts's homiletics, we shall now investigate his preaching practice. Sermons which Watts published furnish abundant research materials. Contemporary comments, though not plentiful, are adequate. Judgments by later writers afford additional evaluations. The doctrines of invention, arrangement, delivery, and style set forth in Watts's own homiletical theory provide further insights into his sermon procedures.

Watts's Sermon Material

To understand Watts's sermon material one must clarify the doctrinal position he presented and define the subjects he discussed, as well as analyze the ideas contained in his pulpit discourses.

Original Position

It has already been pointed out that Watts was a Calvinist. Davis declares, however, that Watts "was not one of the more rigid Calvinists."¹ In addition to rejecting predestination, neither Watts's emphasis on reason and natural religion nor his view of regeneration was

¹Davis, Watts, p. 184.

characteristically Calvinist.² The theological position of his sermon may, nevertheless, be clearly defined. Negatively, he repudiated the basic tenets of the Historic heresies.³ Affirmatively, he expressed the orthodox position in terms of seven major doctrines.

1. By the Fall of the first man, he, together with his posterity, lost their innocence and their immortality, their bodies were subjected to sickness and death, their natural inclinations were perverted from that which is good, and there was a struggle prevailing between the human nature, even from its infancy, to that which is evil.

2. In order to their recovery from this ruin, there is not only a necessity of the pardon of their sins, and reconciliation of their persons to God, but there is need also that their sinful nature be healed, and renewed by sanctifying grace, in order to restore men to virtue and piety, that is, to the love of God and their fellow-creatures.

3. The Son of God, who, in the language of scripture, came into the world to save sinners, came down from heaven to take flesh, and thereby to fulfil the duties of the law, and give an example of perfect holiness. And thus he was appointed to suffer death as a sacrifice and atonement for the sins of men, that mankind might thereby obtain pardon and the favour of God.

4. There is a necessity also, that sinners should heartily repent of their sins, return to God, and be renewed to the principles and temper of holiness, in order to their complete recovery to eternal life and happiness.

5. Besides this repentance and returning to God, it is also required that they believe in the name of Jesus Christ, their Redeemer, or trust in him, with a hearty expectation of the favour of God, through him. And, it is through this faith, they are to be justified and accepted of God.

6. They are also obliged to obey the law of God, as far as this feeble and imperfect state admits of, during their whole life, and still to grow up towards perfection therein.

7. When each person dies, their souls are conveyed to a state of peace and rest, in the presence of God, till the great day of the resurrection, when their bodies shall rise

²See Cornelius Van Til, "Calvinism," Twentieth Century Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge (2 vols.; Grand Rapids, Mich., 1957), I, 139.

³Ibid., "The National Foundation," ibid., I, 735-736.

again from the dead, and the whole person, body and soul, be made happy for ever, in the favour and presence of God their Father.¹

As is apparent from this summary of his concept of orthodoxy, Hallie's chief interest lay in the doctrines concerning individual salvation.

James Hallie's

Within this framework of belief Hallie's common subjects were chosen. Essentially speaking, they were the usual ones. He preached on the meaning and obligation of the Lord's Day, baptism, diligence in spiritual work, privileges of Christian Fellowship, the virtues, the meaning of the sacrament, the mysteries of the Trinity, the advantages of the gospel dispensation, the consolation of the person of Christ, and the world to come.

Despite this general conformity to the usual gospel patterns, certainly special emphasis in Hallie's sermons deserves notice. Chief among these was his concern with the "inner witness." Henshaw speaks only a half truth when he declares that "Hallidge and Hallie were the unclassical gentlemen and scholars, plain but restrained, abiding orthodoxy."² While Hallie feared the "orthodoxy" that rejected the Bible as authority, he feared more the formal Christianity that had no personal experience as a basis. Hallie's sermons emphasized that historic

¹Hallie, "Orthodoxy and Charity," *Tracts*, III, 577-578.

²Robert E. Henshaw, *Religious Revivalism in Massachusetts during England*, p. 35.

Christianity must reveal the life in the personal experience of the individual.

Another of Hodge's favorite subjects was the state of the soul after death. This was a familiar Puritan theme, made even better known by Butler's The Great Change (1696). In his sermons Hodge showed no attempt at an organized system of prophecy. He sought only to comfort the soul by presenting the glories of the resurrection and to warn the lost by considering the sorrows of those without Christ.

About the Trinity also Hodge spoke frequently. Considerable controversy arose from his highly speculative reasoning about the Person of the Holy Spirit.⁶ Few accused him of holding an unorthodox position; others defended him. Such later the Presbyterian theologian, Charles Hodge, testified to Hodge's basic soundness on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, but was objection to his peculiar view on the person of Christ.⁷ In this same criticism John Wesley was even more pronounced, for he wrote Joseph Benson:

Some years since, I read about fifty pages of Dr. Hodge's Lectures treating upon the glorified humanity of Christ. But it so confounded my intellect, and plunged me into such不可救藥的迷途, you might say, that I could not have read it through for five hundred pounds. It led me into Arrianism.⁸

Granting full allowance to these accusations, they must be weighed in the

⁶Hodge, ibid., pp. 180-185 passim.

⁷Charles Hodge, Systematic Theology (3 vols.; New York, 1871), II, 427-429.

⁸Letter to Joseph Benson, Bristol, Sept. 11, 1798, from the Rev. John Wesley, Letters of the Rev. John Wesley, A. M., ed. John Gifford (3 vols.; London, 1821), VII, 28-30.

light of White's affirmation of faith. "That the Father, Son, and Spirit are three Persons and one God."¹⁷

General Character

In general, White's sermons possess three distinct characteristics.

First, although White founded his practical education on Bible doctrine, his goal was not Bible knowledge but the implanting of Christian character and conduct. For example, after a doctrinal foundation laid in the statement and fortified by reasons for the belief, he progressed to this practical education.

He should see this statement of Christ as a divine guard against temptation and sin. 1 Pet. 1. 12, 13, 18. As he which hath called you holy, so he is holy in all manner of conversation: for ye are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a spot without blemish and without stain.

Beloved, what has this son of man, which was in slavery to sin and the power of Satan, been redeemed by the death of the son of God? And shall I run back to my old slavery, and give myself up again to the reign and tyranny of sin? Was this gaily and polluted soul born washed in as precious a laver as the blood of the Son of God? And shall I defile myself again? Shall I return with the dog to his vomit, or with the swine that was washed to her wallowing in the mire? 1 Pet. 11. 22. It was sin that cast my Redeemer on the cross. I feel his agonies and death. And God forbid but shall I that am dead to sin, by my interest in a dying Redeemer, live any longer ungodly? Rom. vi. 2. It is a scandal and reproach to this blessed doctrine of atonement, if I should ever dare to give a loose to my iniquities, while I profess faith in the blood of Christ. O sinner, that I say never turn this adorable grace of thine into weakness.

In the series of sermons from which we have just quoted, he said, "This glorious doctrine of the propitiation of Christ has been explained

¹⁷White, "The Christian doctrine of the Trinity," Works, VI, 279.

¹⁸White, "Atonement," Works, 2, 355-359.

and proved. . . . It resolves that we show the proper uses of it."¹² Then White asserted his student's purpose: "In my chief design is to promote practical piety; and I shall content myself with mentioning few doctrinal propositions, and all the rest shall more immediately direct our practice."¹³ Here was an example of White's method--the historic Puritan procedure of doctrine, reason, and use.¹⁴

Second, White's sermons were characteristically evangelical rather than academic. He claimed that experience, observation, and study had led him "to favor and practice the more evangelical method of preaching. . . ."¹⁵ Curtis Fiske, however, that while White did caught "the glow of the Evangelical Revival," he represented "the quiet and sober [style of] evangelization."¹⁶

Third, White's sermons, judged by modern standards, were heavy and long. Aware of their length, he divided them into two sections when editing them for publication.¹⁷ Admitting that "the style and analysis alike are somewhat labored and heavy," Bergen, nevertheless, claims that White's sermons "are clear, readable, and instructive."¹⁸

¹²*Ibid.*, p. 274.

¹³*Ibid.*

¹⁴See Everett S. Swenson, "John Hall and the Puritan Sermon," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, XLII (October, 1956), 460-67.

¹⁵White, "Orthodoxy and Charity United," *Unity*, III, 412.

¹⁶Curtis, *The Christian Preacher*, p. 166.

¹⁷White, "Sermons," *Unity*, I, 62, 64, 74, 76.

¹⁸Bergen, *History of Preaching*, II, 124.

Specific Questions

Passing now to a more specific level, it may be said that Witt's sermons were characterized by careful organization, purposeful style, unimpassioned delivery, and moving persuasive appeals.

Organization. Witt's sermons were plainly divided. Not only was each division numbered, but its relationship to the development of the sermon as a whole was usually stated. Thus he differentiated among a "proposition," a "thesis," a "reason," an "inference," an "exposition," a "reflection," a "question," an "answer," and an "application." The number of divisions was small. Indeed all Witt's were more than four main propositions. These were simply and clearly stated.

The major divisions of Witt's sermons are easily discerned. His introductions were characteristically short, direct, and contextual. Though outlined in an explicit plan of development, the body of his messages usually reflected the classical pattern of proposition, division, narration, proof, refutation, and conclusion. His propositions were often hortative appeals. They were suitable in length, and were uniformly challenging. Many of his sermons were concluded with a hymn which he himself wrote to summarize the teaching of his sermon. For example, after the sermon "The Death of Henschmann," he presented this hymn.

THE SILENCE OF SCIENCE

I

Assured, my soul, by just degrees,
 Let contemplation rise
 O'er all the rising ranks of things,
 Here, and in worlds above.

II

That is the nation near to God
 Where he makes known his ways;
 That are the men whose feet have trod
 His lower courts of grace.

III

That were the hermits and the Friars
 Who near his altar stood;
 That saw the angels from his palace'd,
 And convers'd with him.

IV

That are the souls deliver'd from clay,
 Before his face they stand;
 That angels in their bright array,
 Attend his great command.

V

None is more divinely blest,
 None can be godlike join'd
 With joys transcending all the rest,
 None wiser and more kind.

VI

But, O what words or thoughts can trace
 The blessed Three in One!
 How vast up spirit, and profound
 The infinite reason.¹²

[1612]. Watts's common style varied with his purposes. When describing his house, it was plain and formal. When exhorting, it became defense, figurative, and emotional. Watts quotes from the *Journal* this contemporary criticism of Watts's common style:

The doctor's early relish for poetry, and long acquaintance with the muse, may probably have occasioned such a florid diction, such a diffusive and poetical style, as some critics of a severer turn of thought may be ready to object to, as not so properly adapted to theological discourses, whether popular or polemical.¹³

But Watts defends Watts as well: "putting into practice his advice to

¹²Watts, "Sermon," *Journal*, I, 146.

¹³Watts, *Journal*, p. 146.

violations to be experimental, witty, and affective.²⁰ Declaring that White "was trying to move souls and not to please the classic critics," he asserts that "literary decorum had to be sacrificed to the larger purpose."²¹

In his choice of words, White adhered to the language of the common people. At no time, however, did he descend to the vulgar. His taste was always in keeping with his material and purpose.

As a rule, White employed short sentences. All his sentences, however, were organized for clarity of meaning, and the few long sentences which he did write must be judged in the light of his concept of punctuation.²² White punctuated not only to clarify the meaning, but also to direct the timing of the voice.²³ For a comma, he said, one should "hold two") for a semicolon, three; for a colon, "a little longer") for a period, interruption, or exclamation mark, "hold five or six, if the sentence is long or . . . four, if it is short."²⁴

White's use of figures was to gain power rather than adornment. A favorite device was the rhetorical question. It sought to his tentative

²⁰ibid.
ibid.

²¹ibid.
ibid.

²²White, "Art of Reading," ibid., pp. 571. In this connection, White declared that what we generally term as punctuation marks "may be distinguished into three sorts, and called signs of the voice, signs of attention, and signs of reading." The signs included the comma, semicolon, colon, and period. All except the colon were used by him in the conventional way. Concerning the colon, White declared, "I never divide between two or more sentences that belong to the same subject, and have any proper connection with one another . . ." In this sense, many sentences which appear long to the modern reader were actually separated by White with a colon instead of a period.

²³ibid.
ibid.

²⁴ibid.
ibid.

passages to attract the earlans by drawing vivid word pictures. Stylistic devices, however, were always interlocked with evangelial purposes, and never isolated on display.

Wilson states of Watts's common style that "in pomp of language neither's [sic] half his sense"; and again "that there was propriety, ease, and beauty in his language."⁶⁵ In accounting for these qualities Wilson explains that Watts had once told him that "he took pains with himself to purgify life to shorten his sentences, and prevent a diffusion of luxury and style."⁶⁶ Wilson admits that in Watts's younger years "his style was too diffused and luxuriant," but asserts that care and age corrected this tendency.⁶⁷ Wilson declares of Watts, "The simplicity and elegance of his expression, and the richness of his imagination, enliven the most common subjects, and add lustre to the most interesting."⁶⁸ Burton notes Watts with Wilson upon as a model for improving common style.⁶⁹

Summary. How Watts delivered his common speech has determined almost entirely from the contents of his biographies. All are complimentary. Wilson speaks of Watts's goal and strategy. Specifically he describes Watts's preaching thus:

⁶⁵Wilson, Watts, pp. 206, 143.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 144.

⁶⁷Wilson, Watts, p. 70.

⁶⁸Wilson, History and Antiquities of Baptist Churches, 1, 206.

⁶⁹Burton, Watts, 7, 3.

but all was velocity, motion, action
 falling, darting, as sparks were kindled
 when they, descending from their throne above,
 revealed to men the councils of the sky.³⁷

Wells, he continues, preached from brief notes, with little physical action and with a solemn but pleasant attitude.³⁸ (Wells further improves Dr. Jennings' account that Wells was witty and eloquent, that he spoke with deep emotion, and inspired reverent attention. He details Wells's habit of pausing at the close of a sentence, his unfurrowed brow, and his complete self-possession.³⁹

Wells declares Wells's presentation was distinct, accurate, and easy, so that the total effect was glowing and impressive.⁴⁰ Wells also refers to Wells's poise and his complete control over himself and his language.⁴¹ He repeats a frequently quoted statement, "I own," says Dr. Johnson, "unlimited the reputation which Dr. Foster had gained by his proper delivery to his friend Dr. Schenck, who told us that in the art of presentation he was far inferior to Dr. Wells."⁴²

Wells declares that Wells's sermons "had all the advantages that could be given them by an impressive diction, and a manner of delivery which, with entire simplicity, seems to have been at the same time elaborately studied yet earnestly sincere."⁴³

³⁷Johnson, Wells, p. 205.

³⁸Ibid., p. 213.

³⁹Johnson, Wells, p. 205.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 205.

⁴¹Johnson, Wells, p. 205.

³⁸Ibid., p. 213.

³⁹Ibid., p. 205.

Steele and Hall conclude that Watts "was, probably, the best orator of any preacher of his generation."³⁷ They also specify that his delivery was extemporaneous.³⁸

Perhaps the best indication of the excellence and power of Watts's delivery, however, was the spectacular growth of his congregation after his decline under the patronage of Olney.

Expository Ability. To persuade his hearers Watts used enthusiasm, reasoning, emotion, motivation, and personal appeal. In preaching he did the "necessarily not only of a clear and faithful representation of things to men, in order to excite their reason and judgment, but of all the skill and force of persuasion addressed to the will and the passions."³⁹

In the 40 authorities are concerned, while Watts seldom quoted from earlier writings, his references to the Bible were numerous. For example, in twelve sermons he made only one direct quotation from non-Biblical sources—a testimony left by the "late venerable Dr. John Hall."⁴⁰ In one of these sermons, however, he quoted the Bible fifty-three times--forty-six references coming from the New Testament and seven from the O.T.⁴¹

³⁷Steele and Hall, *History of Free Churches of England*, p. 804.

³⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 804-805.

³⁹Watts, "The Improvement of the Mind," *ibid.*, I, 113.

⁴⁰Watts, "Expository Discourses," *ibid.*, I, 714.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, pp. 679-681.

Reasoning was a strong and confident element in Netto's arguments. Generally his arguments were short, simple, and immediately apparent. Only when appealing to the learned did he indulge in long and involved chains of thought. For example, when justifying the action of God in sending salvation to the Jews first, Netto gave four reasons: (1) the Jews were the chosen people; (2) the Jews had the Old Testament to guide their understanding; (3) Christ was a Jew by birth; (4) the Jews had the first claim by prophecy.⁴² Each argument was simply stated and fully developed.

Emotional motivation was an equally powerful force in Netto's persuasive appeal. In his sermon entitled "To Encourage the Reformation of sinners," is a single passage he appealed to parental love, self-interest, fear of natural catastrophes, national pride, and danger of death and damnation.⁴³

⁴²Netto, "Sermons," *ibid.*, 1, 336.

⁴³"What will ye say, Fathers, when ye see your young heirs, now grown up to the size of your hopes and wishes, silent and driven away to execution and the gibbet, for crimes which ye never took care to suppress in their youth? Well, what will ye say--but I must forbear to address the tender ear in such accounts of prophetic warnings to prevent your eyes with such prospects as these would touch your passions the sorely; it would make the wound in your souls too deep, and will ye take leave to let a glimpse of such fearful scenes avail you in contribute anything towards the general reformation. Be wealthy citizens, the time may come when ye shall be scarce secure in your dwellings, but be robbed of your treasures by nightly visitations that will satisfy their lusts by rapine, and make provision for their flesh by plunder and violence; ye will confess the judgment of God is just in it, though the sin of man be great; for that ye never gave one penny to carry on the name of the Lord with double. The destruction have now fallen upon you, and visited you of many a year."

"Forsake judgments from God will come; for the wrath of God will be revealed from heaven, sooner or later, against all ungodliness."

An excellent example of Watts's use of giving may be seen in the strong appeal made in the funeral sermon for Sir John Barrow⁴⁵ described in Chapter II.

James Watson⁴⁶

Knowledge about the methods used by Watts in the preparation of his sermons may be gained both from his own remarks and from a study of his sermons themselves. In general, he adhered to five basic principles: take ample time, seek the aid of papers, take plentiful study, compose carefully, and preserve complete freedom.

and unbeliefness of ages. Now, I, W. Flow and brimstone may come down upon us like an hail as upon the cities of the plain; other countries are capable of burning serpents besides Naples and Sicily, and the devils of antichrist, with the breath of his mouth the Lord can raise an earthquake that shall shake great Britain into the sea, and it shall be found so soon. Perhaps God may be now, as it were, saying the man sit with Ephraim and with Israel of old. Now, W. Now shall I tell thee my lesson? Now shall I deliver thee, Testaments!

He can let France be open as like a flood, and Lewis XIV. will be as violent a current of the Lord is with us, as Nebuchadnezzar was when God sent him to perish Jerusalem and the city. Now, W. then the French dragons breath us, and our souls are put under the feet of our enemies, ye say then, perhaps, remember and repeat that ye did not arise for the Lord against evil-doers, and turned down the enemies of his holiness.

"Ye, if the Ministers of God His staff for a season, and his lightnings be not kindled; if plagues, and famines, and foreign wars, be restrained from our shores, and peace and plenty dwell in our harbours; God has judgments of a secret kind to inflict upon us, though they are more silent, and less affect our senses. He can consign us over to the power of Satan, to our beloved lecherous and spiritual death. He can suffer the devil to smite our consciences, and to inspire us from hell to work all uncleanliness with greediness." Eph. iv. 17."

⁴⁵Watts, "Obed to God," Watts, II, 74-75.

⁴⁶Watts, "An Humble Attempt," Watts, III, 25.

Friday, June

Every facet of Volke's temperament pointed to a scheduled life. The importance with which he viewed preaching made his schedule sacred.

Be not delighted or delighted in your weekly preparation for the pulpit. Begin the time for it as early in the week that you may have time enough before you to finish your preparations well; and always allow for accidental occurrences, either from indisposition of body, from interruptions by company, from unforeseen business or friends, &c. that you make haste at the end of the week, and serving God and the souls of men with pure, cold, and unvarnished performance.⁴⁵

Saturday evening, or at least Friday evening, be considered as necessary for correction and review.

Prayer, Volke

Volke considered prayer to be of primary importance as an aid to sermon preparation. In his, the Holy Spirit was not only the Christian minister's supreme teacher but also the donor of sermons of peculiar power.⁴⁶ He stressed, therefore, as "one great and general rule" that the minister "will address of himself by prayer about every part of [his] preparatory studies."⁴⁷ While "prayer for aids and resources from heaven belong to every part of [the minister's] work," in sermon composition these aids are more specific.

Both the direction and assistance of the Spirit of God, for limiting your thoughts to proper subjects, for guiding you to proper scriptures, and freeing your whole

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid., "A Guide to Prayer," Ibid., III, 199.

⁴⁷ Ibid., "An Outline Abstract," Ibid., III, 11.

sermon tells us to the writer and speaker, that it is my attempt the divine and sacred ends proposed."⁴⁷

Preaching, in Volke, was founded upon purpose and was aimed at the winning of a pre-determined response. The preacher's goal was not "to work up a storm, or to hold out an hour." His "great end" was "to say something for the honor of God, for the glory of Christ, for the salvation of the souls of men." In line with this general purpose, his more specific end might be conviction or comfort, conversion or sanctification, inspiration or instructing but, at least, there must be a definite objective end in view. Both in the discerning of this purpose and in the recognition upon which his accomplishment depended, Volke sought divine direction and guidance.

Through Study

The first step in Volke's pre process of sermon preparation was his choice of a text. In addition to prayer guidance, he considered two other factors as decisive in this choice: the character of the hearers, and the purpose of the occasion.

In choosing your texts, or themes of discourse, seek such as are most suited to do good to souls, according to the present state, designs, and circumstances of the people; whether for the instruction of the ignorant; for the correction of the stupid and unlearned; for the edifying and softening of the obstinate; for the conversion of the wicked; for the edification of converts; for the comfort of the timorous and sorrowful; for gentle admonition of backsliders, or more severe reproof.⁴⁸

A study of Volke's choice of texts reveals a strong preference for

the New Testament. Out of fifty-five verses, only eight used Old Testament texts. Of the rest, only three were from the Gospels; the remainder from the Epistles. None of the texts was longer than three verses. The great majority were no more than a single verse; some only a portion of a verse. All were chosen so that the subject of the sermon was epitomized. For example, the text for the sermon entitled "The New Birth Witness to Christianity," was "In that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself."⁵¹ The text for the sermon entitled "The Privilege of the Living Above the Dead," was simply, "Whether alive or dead—all are yours."

As prayer and study joined in the choice of the text, so study and prayer were held necessary to the proper development of the truths to be expounded in the message. By this emphasis White did not deny the possibility of extraordinary assistance from the Holy Spirit. Rather he sought to emphasize that God "bestows upon us our natural capacities" and "blows out our diligence in reading, hearing, meditation, and study." Whether in praying or preaching, he believed, the Holy Spirit "reveals in an ordinary way to the exercises of our natural and acquired faculties of knowledge, memory, vivacity of spirit, readiness of speech, and holy confidence."⁵²

⁵¹1 John 5:10.

⁵²White, "A Guide to Prayer," *ibid.*, III, 170-171. To illustrate White's thoroughness of study, in the sermon entitled "Witness to God the Fidelity of Creatures," he used twenty-four direct scriptural references, plus a great number of partial quotations and allusions. It is clear that the quotations either formed or supplemented portions of those were taken from the Old Testament, and included the books of law, history, poetry, and prophecy.

Furthermore, White considered that a principal function of study was to "organize the various ideas which we derive from our senses, or from the operations of our minds, and join them in propositions."⁵³ Clarity of proposition characterized all of his statements, as fullness of explanation characterized all of his propositions. For example, in the work entitled "The Inner Witness to Christianity," he formulated those propositions, which, in order to demonstrate his method, are here reproduced in his own words.

Eternal life consists in happiness and holiness. It is made up of three parts, and there is such a necessary connection between them, that they run into one another; but, for order sake, I shall distinguish them thus.

The happiness of eternal life consists,—

- I. In the vision of His throne and His face of countenance.
- II. The happiness of eternal life consists also in the special favor of God, which is distinct from the vision of His face.
- III. The happiness of eternal life consists in the pleasure that arises from the regular operation of all our powers and passions.

Holiness may be described by these five necessary ingredients of it.

1. An aversion to, and hatred of all sin.
2. A contempt of the present world, in comparison of the future.
3. A delight in the worship and society of God.
4. zeal and activity in His service.
5. A hearty love to fellow-creatures, and more especially to fellow saints.⁵⁴

To explain the proposition that holiness is "an aversion to, and hatred of all sin," he declares:

⁵³White, "The Improvement of the Mind," *Works*, V, 177.

⁵⁴White, "Holiness," *Works*, I, 7-12.

[1] Religion consists in an aversion to, and hatred of all sin. This is complete in heaven, and without this, heaven cannot be complete.

[2] Every Christian has an aversion to all sin. If he chooses some sin, he continues in them, and takes other impieties, he can never be said to be a true believer in Christ, and to have the work of faith in sincerely wrought in his heart.

[3] Other religions have professed an aversion to some sin, but indulged others. . . . but the business of the gospel of Christ is to keep us from committing any kind of sin whatever.

[4] Other religions have changed one law for another, but the religion of Christ forbids all manner of iniquity, and changes the whole nature into holiness.

[5] Surely there is a spirit and power that accompanies the religion of our Lord Jesus, such as other religions have not, and this was manifest abundantly in the primitive Christians, when those tyrants were converted, whose names were soon written in that black catalogue that the apostle speaks of, 1 Cor. vi. 9. When they, by the light of the gospel, were purified, were purged from their defilements, and were made new creatures.⁵⁵

In such expostitory passages as these, he added "observations" and "reflections," by which he attempted to apply the fruits of his thought to the practical needs of his congregation.

Capital Form

This same practical spirit controlled the form in which Watts cast his sermons. Neither was nor eloquence helped him from three basic considerations: the instruction of the mind, the conviction of the conscience, and the purification of the heart. This three-part guide determined his sermon form.⁵⁶

To instruct the mind Watts sought for carefully analyzed and well

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

⁵⁶ Watts, "An Outline Sermon," *Writings*, III, 11.

stated definitions. The degree to which he achieved his goal may be judged by his definition of "justice" in his sermon entitled "Christian Brotherhood."

That which belongs to regulations is called distributive justice, because it divides and distributes such rewards and punishments as are due to every one, according to the merit or demerit of the person; and this is done either by the law and light of nature, or by the laws of the land in which we dwell.

I apply myself therefore immediately to consider that justice which belongs chiefly to private persons, and which is their duty to practice. This is called commutative justice. This is the equity of dealing, that mutual exchange of benefits, and rendering to every one their due, which is necessary between man and man, in order to the common welfare of each citizen.²⁷

To summarize the sermon, Watts related his sermon directly to the spiritual condition and needs of the hearers.

You have not so many virtuous qualities to exhibit as others, and yet have you suffered vice and misery perhaps to prevail as much in your hearts? Have you been diligent to adorn religion with that amiable character which God and nature has given you? Have you brought his offering to the service of the gospel? Have you maintained your meekness and lowliness, your charity and goodness towards mankind the converse with you? And have you made the profession of Christianity appear illustrious in your behaviour? Have you employed those good dispositions of nature to shine in the kingdom of grace, like diamonds polished and set in a ring of gold? There is abundant reason to expect you should do more honour to religion than others, who are blessed with a temper that so happily inclines virtue and holy love. But have you devoted this blessing merely to earthly friendships and fleshly pleasures and kindness to the weak of the world, with a neglect and disdain of the friends and servants of God? Reflect a little, my friends, for what and did the God of nature confer all these blessings upon you?²⁸

²⁷Watts, "Sermons," *Watts*, I, 349.

²⁸Watts, "On Divine Strength," *Watts*, III, 31.

Waller's allusions to the lives and needs of his people were characteristically direct and, for the most part, as concrete as these examples.

Are you careful to spend as much time as you can in the worship of God through Jesus Christ, and in the concerns of your eternal welfare, either in the closet and retirement, or with some pious companions? Or do you lavish away the evening in familiar forms of regimens and ceremony, merriment and diversion, without a word of God and religion, or neglecting the service of the day for your actual increase of knowledge and grace?

Do we keep upon our tongues the language of piety, and attribute the prosperity or afflictive changes of life to God and providence, or only to good luck and misfortune? Is our conversation such as may improve grace in the hearing, and maintain a series of goodness upon all proper occasions? Do we banish entirely from our visits all loose and profane discourse, and the more notorious crimes of scandal, and introduce in the room of it the language of the children of God?

Can the seasons of their worship be well maintained, or can the master perform it with a clear head and a pious heart in the evening, if he indulged his amusements in public debating houses till near eleven o'clock at night, or till the hour of midnight approaches? Is not evening worship very often thereby neglected by this means?

Can you not save the discourses the waste that time of a play-house, or a vain assembly of merriment, at a public gaming table, or a dancing room, that time, I say, which belongs to God or their families? We spend those seasons in late visits and private balls, or at cards, thereby evening devotion is considerably vitiated? We can wear out whole hours in these foolish and profane recreations, and complain they have no time for prayer? Can you pretend to be persons who are masters of dissuading churches who refuse their stipendiaries to those that? Do you know as mothers who lead their little daughters thither, nor fathers who permit their sons to go without constraint? [sic] and do they know, or will they not believe, that the road to lechery and impiety, to vice and beggary, lies through these scenes of dangerous diversion?/9

Thus did White labor to find a style capable of insuring the acceptance and retention of his ideas in the souls of his hearers.

Material From Sermonizing

For at least two reasons we must believe that the manner White prepared his sermons in the expectation of receiving our thoughts at the time of their delivery. First, he recommended that the experienced pastor use notes rather than a completely written manuscript.⁶⁰ Second, he expressed the conviction that confidence in pre-written material choked the giftness of the Holy Spirit. He asked his fellow ministers,

Be ye glad so liberally for the liberty of prayer, and yet never give our spirits a liberty to express their present views, living, and affectionate thoughts, in distorting the gospel of Christ under the guise of his assistance! My soul we never dare to add any thing to our prescribed notes in speaking to the people, while we take this freedom in speaking to the blessed God!⁶¹

From his own experience he added that "many a sermon that was never written has been delivered in our addresses to the people with glorious success; it has come more immediate and warm from the heart, and may have been blessed of God to save a soul."

A Natural Person

Not much information about White's preaching, as neither his complete, gives only a lifelike and convincing representation of his pulpit work. If we are to catch a glimpse of the actual nature of his

⁶⁰White, "To White to Preyer," Evangelist, III, 176.

⁶¹White, "On Preaching Strength," Evangelist, III, 76.

strategy to most attempt, on the basis of available information, to recreate a typical preaching experience of this pastor. This task let us not underestimate.

The location of the Bay Street meeting house was chosen by choice but, like so much of London, chosen in tradition. This end-of-the-way location had been chosen deliberately because of an action against the Dissenter chapel in earlier years.⁶⁰ The fact that Bay Street had been the early home of the church's founder, the Reverend Joseph Caryl, may also have influenced the choice. The original contract had been with Mr. Charles Gresh, who leased a part of his garden to the church for a period of fifty years. Upon this lot, forty feet wide by fifty feet deep, stood the substantial, square building, constructed about 1711 at a cost of £30.⁶¹

Inside, the building was Puritan plain, but the meeting was enlivened by three balconies. All was quickly reversed and a spirit of expectancy leached the waiting worshippers. It was obvious, too, that the church still located the very center of London dissent.⁶²

As the hour of worship began, Dr. Watts was followed by the Reverend Mr. Price into the pulpit area. Both heard in a moment of final dedicatory prayer.

The singing which opened the service was a new hymn for a

⁶⁰Watts, "Unconquered Affair," in *Book, History His Life and Ministry*, 1828, 1829.

⁶¹Watts, *History and Dedication of Meetinghouse Church*, I, 250.

⁶²*Ibid.*, I, 253.

Christian church. The psalm had been adapted by Watts himself to bear a Christian message, and the lyrics were written to be sung rather than chanted. With a new opportunity to express heart and mind, the congregation stood and sang with deep reverence and feeling. The sound filled the building—a hush came, lifting the melody and carrying the words from heart to heart.

The morning prayer was led by Mr. Price. A touch of Irish still lingered upon his tongue and a touch from God upon his heart. For years the burden of the church had been heavier upon his shoulders, and his compassionate heart now lifted the needs of the flock before the great Shepherd. All admitted him to be a useful preacher, but his weakness in the gift of prayer united the assembly into the very presence of God. He gave Thanksgiving for Mr. Watts's presence, and was answered by a fervent Amen from each worshipper.⁶¹ His petitions were clear, friendly, and practical.⁶² When he had finished there was a season of silence and deep reverence.

When Mr. Watts entered the pulpit, the depth of his spiritual power was felt even before his first sentence was uttered. He was motionless while his small grey eyes moved from face to face, kindly, but with deep earnestness. In this initial contact, love and confidence were communicated in unspoken eloquence between pastor and people. One felt Watts was waiting upon God, and the people with him. His physical

⁶¹Watts, *Journal*, p. 376.

⁶²Watts, *History and Antiquities of Haverhill Church*, I, 113.

weakness was strongly transmutated into spiritual strength. He had appeared emaciated; now he seemed only spare. The largest his little were then five feet in height, and tall only his inner stature. There was a solid strength in the high cheek bones, the low forehead, the emphatic nose. There he had seemed pale, now he appeared ruddy. The spiritual power of prayer, love, and communion with God had bestowed upon him a vitality beyond the physical.

During read Acts 24:15-17 for his text, Watts began his message with a brief but clearly stated contextual reason of the persecution which brought Paul before Agrippa. His voice was fine and slender--like the well-disciplined organist, sensitive, and friendly.⁶⁷ The purpose of his message he set forth by three plainly stated observations:

I. Civil governors among the heathens, before they were taught to persecute the Christians, thought it strange to have soldiers of pure religion brought before them, where the state and the point of it was not concerned.

II. The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the great question in our debates about Christianity, and which we are willing to maintain, is vindication of our religion.

III. Paul would not have affirmed Jesus Christ, a dead man, to be alive, without very good proof of his knowing that the whole religion which he taught the world depended on the truth of it.⁶⁸

As Watts developed his first observation, it was obvious that his aim was to make himself understood, even by the children. His style was simple. He spoke clearly. He appealed to the reason with simple arguments. The psychology on which he proceeded was almost utilitarian.

⁶⁷McNamee, *Watts*, p. 129.

⁶⁸Watts, "Sermons," *Series*, I, 486-491.

The great design of civil government, and the institution of magistracy among men, is to keep the peace, to secure the persons and properties of mankind who were distressed, from all manner of injury; and there is nothing more of religion comes within their province, than is absolutely necessary to secure the public peace.⁶⁹

To substantiate his argument Withs appealed to nature and revelation, to the sciences and the scriptures, and he concluded by stating "that the religion of Christ is not built on the wisdom or power of man, nor doth it need such a support." To this he added his confident belief that Christianity's "own truth and reason, and divine authority, will raise the son up into the world by the assistance of the blessed Spirit, whose power he not let it alone, and preserve it from the weighty violence of his enemies."⁷⁰ The complete confidence of his voice recalled Christ's promise that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Withs's second division was clearly defined by a change in the manner of his delivery and also by the statement of a new proposition.

"Second observation." His voice was a call for attention. Then, with careful emphasis, he declared, "The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the chief article, and the great point, which private christians and ministers are solicited to maintain is the justification of their religion."⁷¹

To guide his people into a fuller understanding of the implications of this proposition he presented two related reasons. First,

⁶⁹ ibid., p. 68.

⁷⁰ ibid.

⁷¹ ibid., p. 69.

Christ's resurrection is the effective proof of Paul's divine commission; second, Christ's resurrection is the foundation of the Christian's hope. The first reason is established logically by scriptural proofs of fulfilled prophecy and supernatural miracles. His second reason was established by an appeal, couched entirely in the words of the Bible, to the doctrine that all hope for redemption, present help, and future exaltation depended on the truth of the resurrection.

While a skeptic might have rejected *any* a sentence as logically unsound, the undisputed sincerity of the preacher's every argument carried a force beyond logic. White's face was alight, his voice vibrated with feeling, his heart full of comfort for those who were bowed by death. His soul filled with the certainty of eternal life and radiant as he cried, "O happy soul! We have given up ourselves sincerely to this all-sufficient Savior, and can apply these consolations to ourselves."⁷⁰

White paused, and again his announced "Third Observation" was a challenge to attention. He looked with compassion and understanding into the faces of his people, as he continued:

Paul would not have affirmed Jesus Christ, who was dead, to be alive again, without every good proof of it.--Here three *two* things are to be considered, or required:

1. Why Paul would not have affirmed it without just grounds.
2. What particular reasons Paul had to believe it; or what good proof he had of it. Neglect the first. Why Paul would not have affirmed it without just grounds: These are some of the considerations to make this evident, *Ysa. 73*

His argument vindicating the justice of Paul's affirmation was based entirely upon the life and character of the great apostle. While

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, p. 564.

⁷¹*Ibid.*

he made five clearly marked divisions in his thought, he concluded with a convincing summary:

Now put all these things together, and can it be supposed that any man, a wise, and dispassionate and learned man, faithful and sincere, as ready to Christianity, and of the name of Christ, should be so effectually convinced of the truth of the doctrine of Christ, and of the facts which support it, as to spend his life in preaching this gospel, and to die for it, if he had not abundant ground to believe it?¹⁶

Here, the preacher paused, and allowed the full implication of Paul's faith to grip each mind before he continued, "And if Paul believed it with such evidence" Again he paused before he concluded with great earnestness, then "we may venture to believe it too."¹⁷

Paul's next work, "Theodicy," presented a new facet of proof to an already established proposition. In spite with the certitude of a man who had investigated truth rather than as one who vindicated his authority.

The next thing to be required is, what special and particular reasons Paul had to believe the resurrection of Christ, and then earnestly to preach it. Now I shall not run through all the various proofs of the resurrection of Christ, which are often summed up together as this reasoning but only mention those which convinced St. Paul and gave him this full assurance, that Jesus was risen from the dead.¹⁸

His proofs Paul presented with each clearly marked division and in each single language that the memory retained them easily: the Vision of Christ, the radiant change in Paul, Paul's own powers, the agreement of Scripture, the confirmation of other witnesses, and the external

¹⁶ibid., p. 385.

¹⁷ibid., p. 386.

social effects of the message. Before the hearers could bring these factors into a consistent view, Tertius paused, holding their thought, and said, "before I proceed any further, I would make two or three remarks." Quickly he pointed out, negatively, the lack of any responsible evidence against Paul's conclusion, and, positively, the advantages of a personal acceptance of this new conclusion in one's own life. Then he proceeded to his abiding memory by putting his argument together.⁷⁵

To this point the force of the sermon lay in its simple, rapid reasoning. Tertius spoke earnestly and directly, almost personally, in his appeal to understand and accept plainly stated propositions and their implications. His power did not lay in physical energy. He used few gestures. He was the sacred dignity of a preacher standing reverently in the presence of his Master to declare the glorious verities of the gospel.

The sermon had been long, but Tertius was unmoved. His words were plain and simple. "I proceed now to explain, what were those blessed effects on you in the heathen world." Again his divisions were carefully and clearly numbered and indicated. Yet, there was a new warmth in every "blessed effect," described as though the very heart of the pastor was speaking.

Oh! how many guilty consciences are made easy, and their eyes made greenish, by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead! he asked. "A risen Jesus calls the soul upward and heavenward." What have we here on earth worth living for, since Jesus is risen from the dead, hath left this world,

⁷⁵ John. 7: 148-155.

and gone to heaven? Jesus, our hope, our life, our strength,
ago! Gal. 1:17 . . . How many captives of Satan have been
 released by the power of Jesus, since his release from the
 grave!

How many fearful and feeble creatures have grown bold and
 victorious in sufferings, and have conquered death itself,
 by death in a dying and rising harbinger? Should he, to lead
you through the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ, 1
Cor. iv. 7. How many believers have laid down their bodies
 in the dust with sweet satisfaction and joy, through faith
 in the resurrection of Christ, and have triumphed over the
 grave! I death shall be thy sting! I grave shall be thy
ribsword! 1 Cor. xv. 55. St. Paul has also declared of
 this with perfection, through the witness where he placed
 the Christian churches, and those wonders of salvation
 wrought among the gentiles, by his preaching of Jesus, and
 his resurrection; and every one of those wonders confirmed
 his belief, that Jesus, who was dead, is yet alive. ¹

By such forward dispatch faith and his sources were lifted. To-
 gether, pastor and people "sat in heavenly places" and surveyed the mean-
 ing of their faith.

The resurrection of Christ confirms our religion. First,
 as it gives sufficient proof that God, whose prerogative it
 is to raise from the dead, approves what Jesus taught. And
 secondly, as Jesus Christ himself foretold his own resurrec-
 tion; as I said before. And it lays a foundation for some
 of the chief doctrines, blessings, and duties of our religion.
 which St. Paul preaches without end; viz. our trust in this risen
 Saviour, our faith in his intercession in heaven, and coming to
 God by him: our dependence on his government; our application of
 ourselves to him; our courage in death; and our joyful hope of a
 resurrection and eternal life. ²

Heaven really was near and the reality of death was replaced
 by the power of an endless life when faith asked: "What is the door to
 death? Jesus, the Son of God, went through the dark valley before us,
 and lay down in the grave, and sanctified it to us for a sleeping place."³

¹2 Cor. 1:10. p. 66.

²2 Cor. 1:10. p. 66.

And then he asked, "Did Jesus rise again from the dead?" There was no need for him to frame an answer, but simply, and yet with moving assurance, he declared, "He shall rise, if we are his sincere followers. He is our King, the first-born from the dead; Eph. 1. 19. and our example."⁷⁷

Wells passed. Then he asked, "Was it so strange a thing to tell us, that our dead son, even Jesus, should be alive again after his death?" For a moment he silently recalled with his listeners the faces of loved ones "lost while" he lived, and then, with radiant victory he cried, "The strange and glorious a sight will it be, when all the dead in Christ, thousands and ten thousands, shall be made alive, with their Lord Jesus at the head of them."⁷⁸ For a moment he stood, towering, then, with tears of joy on his countenance, he looked into the faces of his beloved people and ended his sermon, "Rejoice for ever in the Lord, and comfort yourselves with this divine consolation, Amen."

In a moment the service was over. Each worshiper departed slowly, almost reluctantly, for each was here he had communed with God.

Conclusion

James Wells was without doubt an effective preacher. As Dwight P. Reynolds declares, "Trifling, apt, eloquent, he was one of the great preachers of his era or any other age."⁷⁹

Authentically, his subjects were the customary ones, his treatment conventional, his style undistinguished. His theology was orthodox,

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 413.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Dwight P. Reynolds, "James Wells," Portsmouth, N.H. (December, 1940), 440.

modified fabrication. His organization, too, was unoriginal, following the usage of the Puritan divines as modified by Baxter. When all this is admitted, however, the exceptional power of White's preaching must still be acknowledged. It is this quality that caused Sir Leslie Stephen, after passing lightly by all White's other writings, to declare:

The sermons, however, show something of the old nation. They appeal strongly to the inward witness of the spirit, with a comparative indifference to the ordinary intellectual argument. Unlike most of his contemporaries, he addressed the heart rather than the intellect; and in his hands Christianity is not an unevangelized Islam, but a declaration to men of the stress, by which God pleases to work a supernatural change in human nature.⁶²

If this dynamic core is ignored, White's sermons have only pseudo merit; when it is recognized they take on a measure of greatness.

Judging from all accounts, White's delivery was effective. His own sermons revealed a well conceived theory for effective delivery, and his biographers vindicate the claim that what he proposed for others he successfully practiced in his own pulpit utterances. Though certainly an example of effective contemporaneous preaching, above his art was his dependence upon immediate guidance from the Holy Spirit in the very act of preaching. As White declared, "No man's sermon that was never written has been delivered in our churches to the people with glistering success; it has come more immediate and warm from the heart."⁶³ It was this vital breath which caused Bishop Otter to write, "When you speak

⁶²Stephen, *History of English Thought*, I, 376.

⁶³White, "An Noble Strength," *Works*, III, 26-27.

of the way of preaching among the Massachus, you will not expect it from us to believe, that all the preachers do it with the same force and energy that Dr. Watts has done, and still does.²⁴ Watts's greatness as a preacher, then, lay in his intangible but real spiritual dynamic.

This summary leads to the necessary conclusion that Watts's effectiveness was a personal thing—that it lay in the spirit of the man himself. It was this quality to which Fairbairn refers when he asserts of Watts that "he was one of the few men who . . . preserved the old spiritual order of England," and concludes, on this basis, that "his ministry and his writings form a link between the soul of the seventeenth and the renewed soul of the later eighteenth century."²⁵ It was upon this basis that Watts may be rightly judged a great preacher.

²⁴A letter from Samuel Johnson to Dr. Watts, *Fallen*, Aug. 18, 1728, printed in Watts, *Works*, I, 107-8.

²⁵Fairbairn, *Religious Revival in English History*, II, 110.

CHAPTER I

ABOUT MR. WATKINS

Introduction

Against a background of Isaac Watkins's life, world view, religious convictions, and preaching practice, we have now assembled, organized, and stated the essentials of his preaching theory. By way of conclusion let us summarize, interpret, and evaluate his doctrine.

Summary

While each aspect of Watkins's theology has been treated separately, three points of emphasis are apparent. These three dominant beliefs, undergirding his entire system, are: (1) the Bible is the supreme authority not only for revealed truth, but also for a sacred rhetoric; (2) secular studies make an important contribution to preaching effectiveness; and (3) experience is the source of all human knowledge.

The Authority of the Bible

To Watkins, the Bible, the final authority for revealed truth, was also the supreme authority in sacred rhetoric.¹ In a sermon entitled "A Pattern for a Rising Preacher," he recommended Christ's preaching as the ideal model.² More specifically, he said that the manner, manner, power, effect, and purpose of preaching must all be governed by scriptural precedent. Because the Bible is the supreme source book of

¹Watkins, "An English Attempt," *Evangelist*, III, 86.

²Watkins, "The National Foundation," *Evangelist*, IV, 713-714 *passim*.

writing, correct diction should depend principally upon the material it formulates. Disposition and emphasis should be guided by the weight and importance given a subject in the Bible.¹ The preaching of the prophets and apostles themselves indicated the use of a figurative and soaring style.² Earnest, warm-hearted delivery was endorsed by Bible prototypes.³ Even the use of emotional and imaginative appeals was justified on the basis of Bible models.⁴

Vellie's doctrine of Bible authority was, however, limited to the general meaning of Scripture, and did not extend to a slavish adherence to its exact terminology. He claimed revelation for the "mean" rather than "the specific words."⁵ For this reason exegesis was of less value than general interpretation, and in the work of interpretation "reason" was a lamp second only to revelation itself.⁶ "Reason" was the indispensable tool both for understanding the message of the Bible and for choosing the most effective means for communicating that message to others.

The Function of Reason

The second important element in Vellie's intellectual theory was his view of the role which secular studies played in the preacher's early and continuing education. These included the process of "reason,"

¹Wells, "Orthodoxy and Liberty," *Evangelist*, III, 716.

²Wells, "An Apostle Attempts," *Evangelist*, III, 27.

³*Ibid.* ⁴*Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁵Wells, "The National Foundation," *Evangelist*, I, 77.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 696.

and hence also our's understanding and use of Bible revelation. Skills were increased, powers improved, and expression enriched in direct proportion to the breadth of our's training in the arts and sciences. Preaching was "a learned profession."¹⁰ A broad and thorough education was necessary if the preacher was to understand the authoritative doctrines of the Bible and explain them accurately.

Bible work so far as to specify the particular function that each area of secular education performed in interpreting doctrines and duties, developing subject matter, and utilizing effective appeals in preaching.¹¹ Logic guided the preacher's analysis and interpretation of the Bible. Mathematics trained his power of concentration.¹² Astronomy and the other physical sciences enlarged his appreciation of God's creative work.¹³ Literature enriched his expression.¹⁴ Philology made the meaning of the Bible plain. Hebrew Hebrew helped to make evident the meaning.¹⁵ By "method" the subject matter of revealed truth could be organized, and its parts arranged systematically.¹⁶ By "method" the Bible message was given increased effectiveness.¹⁷

Each of these arts and sciences, therefore, played an integral

Peckham, "The Improvement of the Mind," Exhort. V, 373.

¹⁰Exhort. pp. 355-356.

¹¹Exhort. pp. 357-358.

¹²Exhort. p. 357.

¹³Exhort. pp. 347-348.

¹⁴Exhort. pp. 343-344.

¹⁵Peckham, "An Hebraic Attempt," Exhort. XII, 3.

¹⁶Exhort.

rule in the preacher's education. By this his capacities were enlarged, his skills increased, and his style and delivery improved. For this reason similar studies, Watts held, must be closely united with a deep and personal knowledge of the Bible.

Experience as a Source of Knowledge

The third major element in Watts's instruction was his emphasis upon experience as the source of all human knowledge.¹⁷ By virtue of this doctrine his moral rhetoric came to be centered in persons, rather than in materials or methods. Human nature became the key to the governing principles and procedures, and "sensible factors" were given a position of controlling importance. Religion, Watts argued, must affect a personal spiritual experience. Salvation of the individual was the chief end of preaching.¹⁸ Propositions, the disposition of material, style, and delivery—all must be carefully adapted to the hearers.¹⁹ Arguments must be chosen and evaluated on the basis of sensible effect, as demonstrated in the laboratory of actual life experience.²⁰ Every canon of rhetoric must be adjusted to the central consideration of sensible response.

The Bible itself was to be related to human experience. Because God's revelation lay in an "eternal witness" to spiritual regeneration experienced by each Christian believer, the best method of preaching was

¹⁷Watts, "Philosophical Discourse," *ibid.*, V, 301-302.

¹⁸Watts, "On Sacred Preaching," *ibid.*, III, 11.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 13-16.

²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 16.

that which analyzed and classified one's experiences and one's Word in such a way that the divine supply of the Bible was directly applied to the appropriate human need.⁸¹ Following the terminology of his day, Watts called this "experiential" preaching.⁸²

Such an emphasis upon experience produced a homiletic previously called *the sermon*. The goal of preaching became a lasting experience patterned upon Bible models. Preachers sought to avoid one inadequate, a personal appropriation of truth based upon a full and deep understanding was essential. By the same token, arrival of the audience required arrival of the preacher.⁸³ A strong *stipos* was essential.⁸⁴ In short, Watts's doctrine required the realization of the full personality of both speaker and hearer in the religious experience. Anything less than this could not result in true and lasting persuasion.

In Watts's homiletic, then, the preacher's message was authorized by Bible patterns, enriched by encyclopedic learning, enriched by audience requirements, and designed to produce a "lasting experience" in each individual listener.

Analysis

While an exact analysis of all of the systems of Watts's homiletic is difficult, certain basic relationships are apparent. Elements of the traditional rhetoric provided the foundation and framework of his

⁸¹Watts, "Sermons," *Works*, I, 29.

⁸²Watts, "An *Essay*," *Works*, III, 68-69.

⁸³*Ibid.*, p. 29

⁸⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 29-30.

system. Further practice influenced the discipline of organization, style, and delivery. Psychological, philosophical, and socio-religious forces in the environment helped to shape the conception of purpose and form the methods.

Intellectual Debt

Unfortunately, Watts's rhetorical studies at Bowdoin Academy are unknown except by inference.²⁵ However, as Watts himself admitted, he seldom acknowledged his intellectual debts by specific references to the writings upon which he drew.²⁶ Identification of certain aspects of his rhetorical theories with standard rhetorical works are, however, evident. Three of his general views illustrate this.

First, the ideal training for the ministry, said Watts, should begin at an early age, extend to encyclopedic breadth, and continue throughout life.²⁷ Similarly to the broad program of training advocated by Claver and Quistilian, and other ancient and modern writers is thus apparent.²⁸ Yet as Hunting indicates, this also was a common view in contemporary classical education, and it may have been at least in part from this source that Watts's view was derived.²⁹

Second, Watts agreed with the general run of rhetorical theorists

²⁵Watts, *Watts*, p. 11.

²⁶Watts, "Autobiography," *Watts*, I, 573.

²⁷Watts, "An English Attempt," *Watts*, III, 3-5.

²⁸Claver in *Quintilian*, I, 44-45; Quintilian *Quintilianus Quintilianus* I, II, 8, VIII, 12, 13.

²⁹Hunting, *History of Preaching and Preachers*, p. 76.

and philosophers is expressing a Platonic fear of the use of non-logical criticism, qualifying this only to the extent of stating that the importance of the gospel will justify the use of all persuasive methods, just as the patriotic needs of Greece and Rome justified emotional appeals by the classical orators.³⁰ Moreover, Velle might well have described his concept of the ultimate end of preaching in the words of Plato as "an attempt to make the spirits of citizens as excellent as possible, a struggle always to either that is best, whether it is going to be more pleasing or less pleasing to the hearers."³¹

A third instance of Velle's dependence upon traditional rhetorical doctrine in his insistence that while discovering "the available means of persuasion in a given case" was the preacher's first duty, his task was not completed until the "means" thus derived had been applied in actual and successful practice.³²

The basic structure or form of Velle's sacred rhetoric may also be termed essentially classical. As Brainerd, among others, has shown, the early eighteenth century was a period when "the so-called 'reversion to classicism' [in rhetorical thought] constantly gained momentum."³³ Velle was a part of this movement. As has been demonstrated, the five

³⁰ Velle, "The Supremacy of the Word," *ibid.*, V, 343.

³¹ Plato (*Republic* 403).

³² Aristotelian (*Rhetoric* 1357a) Cited by Jarrett, p. 5; Velle, "An Rhetoric Attempt," *ibid.*, III, 36-37.

³³ Douglas Brainerd, "John Ward and His Rhetoric," *English Language*, XVII (March, 1934), 13.

traditional means of invention, disposition, memory, style, and delivery found the solution of his doubts. Second only to Biblical characters his favorite rhetorical models were Cicero and Demosthenes.³⁶ While this broad classical front, however, forbids variations in White's decisions should be pointed out.³⁷

In the matter of invention, for example, White varied from classical procedure in two important respects. First, he denied any real value in the "plans" of invention.³⁸ Influenced by Locke and Burke, he found greater worth in their new "experimental" approach to truth than in the ancient topics. Second, he held that the chief end of Christian preaching was conversion by persuasion, rather than spiritual elevation by exposition.³⁹ This led White to emphasize involutional procedures by which Bible material might be selected to issue words, rather than to rehearse the traditional device for making an abstract topical analysis of a subject.⁴⁰ It was this very lack of working house words which, as Burke has pointed out, revitalized the traditional Puritan involutional practices to produce the experimental preaching of the Great Revival.⁴¹

White's Disposition theory also, though revealing a classical

³⁶White, "The Improvement of the Mind," *Ensay*, I, 343.

³⁷Id., *Illustrations*, "John Ward and His Disciples," p. 16.

³⁸White, "Logic," *Ensay*, I, 126. Cf. Oliver Samuel Powell, "Sources of the Eighteenth-Century Movement in England 1700-1790," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 22 (February, 1936), 3.

³⁹White, "An Artistic Attempt," *Ensay*, III, 18.

⁴⁰*Id.*

⁴¹Burke, *The Art of Rhetoric*, p. 18.

formulation, showed important variations. These resulted both from his own creative efforts and from his Puritan heritage. His own system of logic and rhetoric provided intellectual procedures for the analysis and division of subject matter.⁴² Spurious information and scholastic terminology he rejected with equal distaste.⁴³ Instead, Verbe strives for complete simplicity.⁴⁴ For exposition he favored a natural order so "that the knowledge of the things which follow depends in a great measure on the things which go before."⁴⁵ Where persuasion was the goal, he advocated an "artificial" or "contrived" method designed "to draw and engage the whole soul . . . so as to attain the end sought."⁴⁶ In the formal composition of a sermon, Verbe recommended the ancient division of introduction, proposition, narrative, exposition, argumentation, confirmation, refutation, and conclusion. These, however, were to be adapted to the purpose of the speaker and the nature of the subject.⁴⁷

Style was of major importance to Verbe. His emphasis on clarity, appropriateness, and comprehensibility was in the best classical tradi-

⁴²Verbe, "The Improvement of the Mind," *Verbe*, V, 344-345. Cf. Swell, "Sources of the Clericalist Movement," p. 3.

⁴³Verbe, "Logic," *Verbe*, V, 64.

⁴⁴Verbe, "An Noble Attempt," *Verbe*, III, 84-85.

⁴⁵Verbe, "Logic," *Verbe*, V, 160-161.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, p. 174.

⁴⁷Verbe, "The Improvement of the Mind," *Verbe*, V, 344.

tion.⁴¹ The affected tropes and figures of the sixteenth and seventeenth-century stylist, Watts flatly rejected. Figurative expressions were acceptable only for the purpose of arousing the learner and here Watts patterns rather than literary rules were to set the standard.⁴² In this attitude Watts was undoubtedly affected by the strong criticisms of William Temple, William Prynne, and Joseph Hall against "ornamental style in pulpit oratory."⁴³ While Watts acknowledged some value in adopting a "sublime" style, especially when one was addressing a learned or "polite" audience, his chief stylistic ideals were clarity, simplicity, and persuasive effectiveness.⁴⁴

In the area of delivery Watts's comments suggest varied influences. He collected contemporary English sermons delivery as a careless reading of "words without spirit."⁴⁵ He complimented Bishop Gibson on the fact that his directions for preaching brought against this practice.⁴⁶ He praised the "superior dignity and power" of the French pulpit orators.⁴⁷ Nevertheless and closer, he waited as typifying the sort of preaching needed in English churches.⁴⁸ While preaching, and

⁴¹Watts, "A Guide to Prayer," *Works*, III, 143-147.

⁴²Watts, "An English Abstract," *Works*, III, 87.

⁴³William Samuel Howells, *Style and Rhetoric in England 1580-1700* (Oxford, 1907), p. 394.

⁴⁴Watts, "The Improvement of the Mind," *Works*, I, 361.

⁴⁵Watts, "Miscellaneous Thoughts," *Works*, IV, 343-344.

⁴⁶Letter from Dr. Watts to Bishop Gibson, *Cambridge Notes*, August 25, 1720. Watts, *Works*, I, 1471-1472.

⁴⁷Watts, "Miscellaneous Thoughts," *Works*, IV, 344.

⁴⁸Watts, "The Improvement of the Mind," *Works*, I, 313.

particularly that of Christ, was acknowledged as the ideal.⁷⁴ The value of imitation was emphasized, although mechanical imitation was feared.⁷⁵ The study of dictionary words was recommended, but no particular books or authors specified.⁷⁶

Wells's treatment of the nature of money and his discussion of the means for its development were criticized. The importance he gave to this faculty as a means of developing character, however, was praised. Although allusions were made to procedures advocated by the students as well as by such contemporary writers as associates as Dr. Gray and Dr. Lee, undoubtedly Wells's theories carried the strongest influence in molding Wells's conception of this faculty.⁷⁷ In addition, his concern with the teaching of etymology and their principles strongly influenced his natural concept of money.⁷⁸

Further Factors

Without apology, Wells admitted that his preaching advice had a noteworthy further heritage.⁷⁹ In particular, this source helped to shape his theory of the organization, and his analysis of the purpose and proper steps of success.

⁷⁴Wells, "The National Foundation," Psychic, V, 173.

⁷⁵Wells, "The Art of Reading," Psychic, IV, 459.

⁷⁶Wells, "An Author's Attempt," Psychic, III, 31.

⁷⁷Wells, "The Improvement of the Mind," Psychic, V, 207. Cf. "Philosophical Science," Psychic, V, 222.

⁷⁸Wells, "A Movement as the Way of Destruction by Collection," Psychic, III, 222.

⁷⁹Wells, "An Author's Attempt," Psychic, III, 24.

It was from this tradition that Watts adopted the pattern of sermon organization built around the three elements of doctrine, proof, and use. Miller declares this format had been in use for centuries.⁶⁰ Everett E. Swenson, on the other hand, asserts the "use" section was the more recent creation of the Reverend John Hall (d. 1590).⁶¹ In any event, Watts recognized the three-fold division as characteristic of the "ancient" Puritan, and recommended its continuing use.⁶²

In addition, in the area of sermon organization Watts accepted and furthered the reforms of the Puritan leader, Richard Hooker. Recognizing the confusion resulting from the multipled divisions of the traditional Puritan sermon, Hooker had advocated reducing the number of divisions.⁶³ Because greater clarity had resulted from this pattern, Watts called for an even simpler pattern of organization.⁶⁴

Thus, too, from the Puritans came Watts's concept of "experimental" preaching.⁶⁵ This view, which held that each condition of the soul should be paralleled by appropriate Bible materials, was an essential element in his sacred rhetoric.⁶⁶

⁶⁰Miller, *History of Preaching*, p. 23.

⁶¹Everett E. Swenson, "John Hall and the Puritan Sermon," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, XLV (October, 1950), 288.

⁶²Watts, "An Accurate Attempt," *Tracts*, III, 25.

⁶³J. Foster Mitchell, *English Puritan Preaching From Andrew to Filkins* (London, 1929), p. 111.

⁶⁴Watts, "An Accurate Attempt," *Tracts*, III, 25.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, p. 24.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

Finally, while rejecting the admitted "necessities" of some early Puritan sermons, Watts acknowledged that their concern might be a motivating force in providing a preacher's directness of style and eagerness of delivery, and also serve to give him a clearer understanding of the evangelistic purpose of the ministry.⁶⁷

Psychological Factors

Three factors in Watts' environment influenced his beliefs: (1) the practice of applying current psychological principles to construct theories of communication, (2) the empirical approach to problems of knowledge and truth, and (3) the anti-religious sentiment in the new English style's claim.

In the first of these areas, Watts believed that a better understanding of man's nature would increase the preacher's communicative effectiveness. Accepting the findings psychology of the fifteenth, and influenced by Locke, he recognized reasoning, imagination, memory, passion, and will as powers of the mind, and showed how each of these was linked to the physical body.⁶⁸ On this basis he constructed a complete theory of human psychology, making an especially extensive analysis of the emotions.⁶⁹ However, he was particularly concerned with the problem of applying psychological findings to the communicative

⁶⁷Watts, "The Improvement of the Mind," *Works*, V, 328-331.

⁶⁸Watts, "Philosophical Essays," *Works*, V, 332-335.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, p. 335. See also Watts, "The Principles of the Passions," *Works*, IV, 375-426 *passim*.

problems of the ministry.⁷⁰ This interest shaped his rhetoric, meaning then, as we have already said, to be focused upon audience rather than subject requirements.⁷¹

The most fundamental effect the prevailing philosophy of empiricism had on Watts's rhetorical doctrine is to be found in his approach to "truth." The well and measured material was, he believed, proportional to the thoroughness with which it was first understood.⁷² The reality of personal religion was affected by an individual's experience of God.⁷³ Truth was best obtained by an experiential and reasoned study of objective reality.⁷⁴ The most effective approach to the lasting persuasion of man was to be made on the basis of man's nature. Preaching methods could not be deduced from a priori principles; they must be derived from the basis of actual experience.⁷⁵

Finally, Watts's rhetorical was influenced both by the emergence of a powerful English middle class and by the emerging Christian revival that marked his day. The emergence of a democratic English middle class affected rhetoric generally.⁷⁶ The religious movement affected

⁷⁰Watts, p. 605.

⁷¹Watts, "An Noble Attempt," *Watts*, III, 15-39.

⁷²Watts, "A Discourse on the Way of Instruction by Fellowship," *Watts*, III, 412-413.

⁷³Watts, "Common," *Watts*, I, 85.

⁷⁴Watts, "Logic," *Watts*, 8, 173.

⁷⁵Watts, "An Noble Attempt," *Watts*, III, 13.

⁷⁶Robert Hahn, *A History of Public Speaking* (New York, 1935), pp. 161-169.

preaching specifically.

Howell has specified the nature of the change this revolution worked on rhetoric. "These social and political pressures," he says, "had their consequences in the world of English learning, and one of those consequences was that rhetorical theory tended to become more simple and less ritualistic in all respects. . . ."⁷⁷ Watts's brevity of simple organization, a style adapted to the common level, and plain conventional delivery reflected the influence of this movement.

In addition, certain trends in eighteenth-century religious affected Watts's thinking about homiletics. He felt not only the general pressures which the course of events had placed upon minister preachers, but also the specific challenges arising from the spreading revival.

Minister preachers had long been under a growing compulsion to convert individuals. The increasing power of the press and the political advantage enjoyed by the clergy of the Established Church made it necessary that they exert themselves continuously. As Miller says, "Discontented by those in authority yet bent on saving the world, . . . they were compelled to seek support wherever it might be found among the people."⁷⁸ The preacher, if they wished to survive, had to find means to stir imagination, induce emotional excitement, wring the hearts of sinners, win souls to the Lord, in other words make their sermons interesting and full.⁷⁹ By Watts's time these pressures had

⁷⁷Howell, *Logic and Rhetoric in England*, p. 272.

⁷⁸Miller, *Days of Revivalism*, p. 15.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, p. 23.

changed the basic character of classroom preaching. It had become simpler and more direct, and specifically designed "to convert sinners."⁵⁰ This process, begun in the seventeenth century, may be regarded as a strong influence in Watts's development of a homiletical directed to conversion.

A final molding agent shaping Watts's sacred rhetoric was the revival religious revival. Concerning the early years of Watts's ministry, Robert Hawley claims that "the darkest period in the religious annals of England, was that prior to the preaching of Whitefield and the two Waltons."⁵¹ This need challenged Watts to renewed efforts "to revivify the flame of spiritual religion."⁵² Watts's reaction to Jonathan Edwards' account of the American Awakening is clearest evidence of his motives.⁵³ Recognizing individual conversion, rather than confirmation or mass, as the necessary key to revivification, Watts was not only influenced by, but also strongly contributed to the theory of revival preaching. His *Practical Thoughts*, as has repeatedly been stated, was directed toward the provision of a style of preaching designed to effect just such a conversion of individual sinners.

In summary, then, Watts's homiletics reveals a complex of influences: a ground-work of classical rhetoric, a structure shaped in large

⁵⁰ Howell, *Logic and Rhetoric in England*, p. 394.

⁵¹ Robert Hawley, *The Early Life of the Religious Revivalist of the Commonwealth* (London, 1871), p. 95.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ Jonathan Edwards, "Sketches on the Revival of Religion in the Year 1740" (New York, n.d.), p. 7.

part by the methodical discipline of the earlier Puritans, an application of contemporary philosophical and psychological theories, and the pressures and challenges of the anti-religious movement.

Relevance

A final judgment concerning Nettie's methodical doctrines depends upon an evaluation of their historical worth. What was their contemporary influence? To what extent did their influence continue? What is their present-day value?

Contemporary Influence

Nettie's doctrines not only helped to shape the preaching practices of four pivotal eighteenth-century ministers but also to establish a preaching pattern adopted by many ministers of the age.

First, as Barclay among others has shown, Nettie influenced the preaching of Whitefield and Wesley. One must agree with Harold Fisher that the sermons of these two revolutionized English preaching.¹⁹ Orson declares they were "such preaching as England had never heard."²⁰ Henry Hyde calls them the prime factors in restoring the new spiritual zeal, promoting missionary work, and effecting social reform.²¹ Yet, without minimizing the personal heroisms of these great revivalists, the influence of Nettie's theories on their work must be recognized. "The great vision of his mission," says Barclay, "was gained by the adoption

¹⁹ Fisher, *Preaching*, p. 21.

²⁰ Orson, *English*, IV, 151.

²¹ Hyde, *Christian Leaders*, 26-27-28.

of his recommended style of preaching by Whitefield, the two Wesleys, and their copyists.⁵²

In addition, Watts influenced Philip Doddridge, a key figure among eighteenth-century dissenters. Doddridge collaborated with George Campbell in translating the New Testament, taught Joseph Priestley, introduced English for Latin in his classroom, and conducted one of the most important contemporary series of lectures on preaching.⁵³ Pointing out that Watts and Doddridge advocated the same standards of style, the same types of appeals and proofs, the same patterns of emotional arousal and religious delivery, Barclay sees the influence of Watts as a major force in shaping the sacred rhetoric of the younger man.⁵⁴ Doddridge's veneration of Watts, and his own adoption of imitatorship, substantiates this claim. In the Preface to his most famous book, *The Method and Progress of Religion in the Soul*, he declares, "My much honored friend, Dr. Watts, . . . laid the scheme especially of the former part."⁵⁵ Watts quotes at length from this same preface to illustrate the extent to which Doddridge's thinking was influenced by Watts.⁵⁶

⁵²Barclay, *Inner Life of Religious Awakening*, pp. 396-404. Wesley writes in his journal, under the date of February 27, 1703, "I abridged Dr. Watts's pretty *Discourse on the Passions*." In his writings Wesley refers to Watts fifteen times. John Wesley, *The Works of the Rev. John Wesley*, 4th ed. (14 vols.; London, n.d.).

⁵³Wheaton, *English Education Under the First Act*, pp. 129, 202, 213.

⁵⁴Barclay, *Inner Life of Religious Awakening*, pp. 397-404.

⁵⁵Philip Doddridge, *The Method and Progress of Religion in the Soul* (New York, n.d.), p. 3.

⁵⁶Watts, *ibid.*, p. 293.

Lastly, Watts influenced the Reverend John Mason, an important player in the abolitionary movement. The place of Mason in the abolitionary movement has been widely recognized. Gifford wrote him on the first day "to justify the use of the word abolition to describe delivery."²² Johnson begins his account of the key figures in the movement with a discussion of Mason's work.²³ While Sewall suggests that Mason was simply a link in a trend that began almost a century earlier, he still recognizes the importance of his journey.²⁴ John Wesley chose Mason's book as the basis for his address to preachers.²⁵ Mason's instructions concerning "value steps" were, however, only a duplication of those advanced by Watts. However, as we have seen, his important concept of "autocracy" was based upon a direct quotation from Watts's Art of Reading.²⁶

In addition to his influence on these four key eighteenth-century preachers, Watts helped to set a methodical standard that was widely imitated among his contemporaries. Books unknown Haskins's testimony on this point,²⁷ while Foster recalls one of the age-old

²²Gifford Gifford, "Historical Theory in Colonial America," History of Spanish Abolition in America, ed. Earl K. Rieu (New York, 1961), p. 25.

²³Frederick A. Johnson, "English Sources of Abolition," ibid., p. 115.

²⁴Sewall, "Sources of the Abolitionary Movement," p. 13.

²⁵Johnson, "English Sources of Abolition," ibid., 115.

²⁶Mason, In Reply to Haskins, pp. 30-31.

²⁷Watts, Watts, p. 124.

tendency of lesser preachers to imitate great and popular pulpit masters.⁹⁷

After citing Watts's wide renown, Lady Huntington, who knew him, said, "Wherever he goes, he is regarded with veneration."⁹⁸ Explicitly referred to Watts as one of the three most able teachers of his generation.⁹⁹ Ingers and Bennett claim that Denmead was the only contemporary preacher surpassing Watts "in the claims of pulpit eloquence."¹⁰⁰ It is understandable that preaching theories of such a highly respected individual should exercise a wide influence in molding the thought of other men in his profession. Indeed, as is indicated in *An English Attempt*, Watts himself felt this to be the case.¹⁰¹

The claim for Watts's contemporary homiletical influence rests, therefore, upon his specific contributions to the work of Whitefield, Wesley, Knollys, and Hays, as well as on the more general influence he exerted over his profession as a whole by means of his writings and reputation.

Continuing Influence

In addition to this contemporary influence, Watts's homiletical theories affected preaching practices in subsequent years. Evidence of this fact is found in the repeated publication of his books contain-

⁹⁷Ingers, *Representative Modern Preachers*, p. 18.

⁹⁸Lady S. Knight, *Lady Huntington and Her Friends* (New York, 1870), p. 25.

⁹⁹Explicitly, *ibid.*, IV, 149.

¹⁰⁰Ingers and Bennett, *History of Massachusetts*, III, 474.

¹⁰¹Watts, "An English Attempt," *ibid.*, III, 3-4.

ing preaching services and in the continued reference to his sermons in later textbooks as illustrations.

The re-publication of Watts's works was frequent. In fact, at the moment of his life in 1800 suggests, he was one of the most popular authors of the century.¹⁰⁰ The Library of Congress lists six editions of the Logic, one as late as 1878; eighteen editions of The Improvement of the Mind, one as late as 1880; three editions of A Guide to Prayer, one as late as 1874; and three editions of his work on the passions, one as late as 1878. The holdings of the British Museum follow the same pattern, but include also one French edition of the Logic and one Swedish edition of The Improvement of the Mind.

For more than a century writers on homiletics continued to draw from Watts's sermons as preaching. John Norton not only copied preachers to study Watts's theory but also he used his sermons as models for imitation.¹⁰¹ William Russell suggested Watts as a model of "the pure, imaginative style."¹⁰² Elmer ranked Watts with Everett, Parker, Kimball, Knapp, Redbridge, Beecher, O'Brien, and Campbell because of his contribution to the concept of contemporaneous preaching.¹⁰³ In addition, it should be recalled that Redbridge, Beecher, and O'Brien admitted being strongly influenced by Watts. An important nineteenth-century work,

¹⁰⁰The Stationary of Religious Manuscripts, ed. Sir Leslie Stephen and Sir Henry Lee (2d vol.) London, 1894, II, 776.

¹⁰¹Norton, Logic, I, 94.

¹⁰²William Russell, Practical Homiletics (Boston, 1871), p. 107.

¹⁰³Elmer, Homiletics, pp. 418-421.

The Royal Historical Commission, placed a volume of Wette's sermons with the works of Burke, Bunsen, Chubb, Foster, Jennings, and Peckridge.¹⁴⁷

This continuing influence of Wette's writings as preaching exhortation was enhanced by his general distinction in the history of religion. Because of this, as well as his influence on Wesley and Whitefield, Davis concludes that he was "the key transitional figure" in the movement which produced modern evangelical preaching.¹⁴⁸

Wette's Key Value

The final question concerning Wette's homiletics relates to its present day value. In this connection, three observations seem pertinent.

First, Wette's preaching sermons are valuable in helping the modern student understand and evaluate early eighteenth century homiletical doctrine. This has been a cloudy period in the history of rhetoric as well as in the history of preaching, and as Howell suggests, our historians have neglected several of its most important authors.¹⁴⁹

Wette depicted the religious of the English people of the period--the ignorance and lethargy, the lack of concern with spiritual salvation. He showed how much contemporary preaching was a profane display of logical analysis, as the new law, and a formulaic, meaningless language, as

¹⁴⁷See Harry Taylor and Henry E. King, "Eighteenth-Century: a List of Periodical and Historical Studies in English," Church Historian, XLII, (Special Issue, 1970), 51.

¹⁴⁸Davis, ibid., p. 226.

¹⁴⁹Howell, "Sources of the Eighteenth-Century," p. 2.

the other.¹¹⁸ He explained the prevailing view of the inadequacy of the traditional rhetorical topics as sources for sermon material.¹¹⁹ He explained why a new system of disputation, with parts arranged according to the speaker's purpose, was a growing necessity.¹²⁰ He expressed a movement in style toward a more but direct simplicity of expression.¹²¹ He revealed by his allusions the influence which French preachers and stylists were exercising on the English preachers of his day.¹²² He contributed to the movement for "natural" reading and for the contemporaneous delivery of sermons.¹²³ He provided a survey of varied systems of exhortation.¹²⁴ He exemplified the influence which Locke's theories were having upon the problem of acquiring and transmitting truth.¹²⁵ In short, White's extensive writings present a valuable window through which early eighteenth century preaching doctrine and the influences that aided them may be viewed and evaluated.

Second, White's lectures have intrinsic value for students of all ages. His philosophy of preaching was grounded in empirical

¹¹⁸White, "Miscellaneous Thoughts," *Works*, IV, 342-344.

¹¹⁹White, "Logic," *Works*, V, 151. Cf. Howell, "Sources of the Eighteenth Sermon," p. 3.

¹²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 172.

¹²¹White, "An English Attempt," *Works*, III, 65-66.

¹²²White, "Miscellaneous Thoughts," *Works*, IV, 344.

¹²³*Ibid.*, pp. 343-344.

¹²⁴White, "The Improvement of the Mind," *Works*, V, 277-287.

¹²⁵White, "Philosophical Remarks," *Works*, V, 300-309 passim.

purpose and adapted to the end of persuasion.¹¹⁸ Simplicity, directness, vividly, preparedness, adaptation, contemporaneity and natural delivery, the systematic use of non-logical motivations--these elements have as much worth today as when Velle first advanced them. Each of them Velle said said has since been restated, and in some instances further developed and clarified. This fact alone shows the value of Velle's doctrine in that he early expressed a theory of communication accepted as valuable by later writers.

Two of Velle's hypothetical doctrines, however, contain ground of value sufficient to merit special emphasis.

First, Velle gave primary importance to the power of memory in promoting the ends of preaching. This retentive power, he repeatedly asserted, actually formed an "inward" character,¹¹⁹ that a man remembers becomes the real man. Velle recognizing the function of memory in enabling the hearer and speaker to retain speech materials, Velle contended that this function was far less important than the lasting effect worked by the material that was thus retained. Hence preaching is primarily concerned with character, Velle's emphasis gave added impetus to the acquisition, organization, and presentation of sermon material adapted to the permanent building of human character. The work of persuasion, in his view, went deeper than thought or belief; as retained in the faculty

¹¹⁸Velle, "An Exotic Attempt," *Harvard*, III, 14.

¹¹⁹Velle, "A Way of Instructing Children by Collection," *Harvard*, III, 225.

of money, it effected a permanent change in the character of the learner.¹²⁰

A second major emphasis in White's teachings that has value today is his insistence upon the necessity of emotional arousal to accomplish the persuasive end of preaching. Emotional arousal is normal in all persuasion, but in the area of Christian preaching, White emphasized a lack of emotional arousal is spiritually immature.¹²¹ Admitting the necessity of objectivity in apologetics, he pled with urgency that in evangel and edifying words warmth and passion were both normal and essential.¹²² White maintained--and the history of the contemporary religious revival supported his argument--that religion must reach the heart in order to stay in the head.

Later voices have raised the same conclusion. In 1979, declaring that the "pulpit is not the place for compromise," Bishop William Simpson asserted that the "preacher should pour forth truth from a warm and sympathetic heart, for the personal benefit and edification of his congregation, and to touch and elevate the aspirations of every individual."¹²³ In 1981, Ellen Frankland wrote that in the power of the Methodist system comes not simply from a philosophy and a program, but from "a burning passion, which moves people unconsciously and functionally devoted to its cause," so that preaching becomes and more if it is to win.

¹²⁰White, "An Bible Approach," *Evangel.* III, 99-100.

¹²¹*Ibid.*, p. 95.

¹²²*Ibid.*, p. 99.

¹²³William Simpson, *Lectures on Preaching* (New York, 1975), p.

and told me.¹²⁴ If the views of Hume and Freilond concerning the necessity of rationalism for effective preaching are correct, then Watts's advice in this regard deserves careful attention by preachers of this and all ages.¹²⁵

In 1940, Harry Swatt, after searching widely for a book on proper allegories to modern needs, concluded that "as far as we have been able to trace, there is only one such book. It is James Watts's A Guide to Imagery."¹²⁶ In 1954, L. Russell Cole, after searching for a book of serious allegories in this hour of world trial, turned to Watts's World to Come, with the claim that "no one living one could possibly have produced such a book as this. Simply, we need it today more than it was needed in the eighteenth century."¹²⁷ In 1956, when John V. Tillson composed his book, John Locke and the Age of Reason, he returned to the usage of Watts as an aid in interpreting Locke's philosophy in terms of contemporary thought.¹²⁸ When Swatt reintroduced the sources of the English education movement he listed Watts as one of three "who best represents the major trends in English logical theory for the first half of the eighteenth century."¹²⁹

¹²⁴James Freilond, The Life of Hume (New York, 1851), p. 81.

¹²⁵See Watts, Imagery, p. 139.

¹²⁶Harry Swatt, "Introduction," in Watts, A Guide to Imagery (London, 1940), p. 11.

¹²⁷L. Russell Cole, "Watts's Preface," in Watts, World to Come (Chicago, 1954), p. 15.

¹²⁸John V. Tillson, John Locke and the Age of Reason (Detroit, 1956), p. 188.

Certainly, these statements suggest that as nature relentlessly constantly reveals new and important contributions which Nature made in other fields, so may his contributions to providing theory be found to offer practical and revealing values to those who still study and evaluate them.

Perhaps the true value of Nature's limitations for me today may be summarized by reference to Nature's Well. In the city of Southampton, his birthplace, there remains an old well from which cool, refreshing water may still be drawn. Used by the Natures family two centuries ago, it is still called Nature's Well. This well typified Nature's contribution. To those who care to delve into Nature's limitations there yet remains clear, sound, complete, practical, challenging advice for personal unimpeded growth.

²⁰⁸Beall, "Sources of the Revolutionary Movement," p. 2.

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Works by James Watts

While the 1850 edition of Dr. Watts's Hymns, which has been used in this study, contains all the writings enumerated below, this list is presented as supplemental material to show the chronological order of their publication. Under each separate listing, and as an additional supplement, bibliographical information has been collected from the catalogues of the Library of Congress and the British Museum to indicate the remarkable popularity enjoyed by Watts's writings.

Watts, James. The Works of the Reverend and Learned James Watts, D.D. 6 vols. London: Printed by and for J. Baskett, 1850.

- 1706 Three Lyrics. Poems chiefly of the Lyric kind, in Three Books. Sacred I. To Devotion and Piety. II. To Virtue, Honour, and Friendship. III. To the Memory of the Dead. [New York 1760. Boston 1776. Glasgow 1789. Boston 1790, 1795, 1803. Vienna 1790, I, 1794. Newcastle 1803. Göttingen 1813. Boston 1804. Second Ed. London 1796, 1713, 1771, 1777, 1793. Boston 1791. London 1792, 1795, 1796, 1779, 1779, 1794. Leeds 1798. London 1804. New 1806.]
- 1707 Essay against Superstitionism, wherein the Secret Springs of that Vice are traced and the Mischievous Effects of it fully Surveyed.
- 1707 A Sermon Preached at Salter's-Hall to the Students for Reformation of Manners, in the Cities of London and Westminster, October 6th 1707.
- 1708 Hymns and Spiritual Songs. In Three Books. I. Collected from the Scriptures. II. Composed on Divine Subjects. III. Prepared for the Lord's Supper. With an Essay towards the Improvement of Christian Piety, by the use of Evangelical Hymns in Worship, as well as the Practice of Devotion. [London 1707. Boston 1776. Providence 1781. New York 1790. Rome (N.S.) 1794. New York 1795. Holland, Pa. 1794. Boston 1810. Boston 1810. Philadelphia 1810. New York 1811. Boston 1841. Seventh edition 1792 (London) 1793, 1800, 1805, 1794. Fourteenth edition 1790, 1794, 1795, 1795, 1795, 1801, 1795, 1800. Edinburgh 1772. (n.l.) 1779, 1773, 1779. Salisbury 1779. London 1773. Birmingham 1779. Salisbury 1779. Coventry 1778. London 1777, 1777, 1779, 1781.

- 1726 *Sermons on Various Subjects, viz. I. II. III. The Inward Witness of Christianity. . . .* 1112. 117. Appearing before God. There is every Thing relating to Christian Experience, and the Future State, are set in a Fair and Easy Light. Fourteen sermons with a General Epistle annexed to each Subject. [London 1726, 1727. Third edition London 1740. Several editions before 1740. Ninth edition London 1775, 1785, 1792, 1811, 1828.]
- 1728 *In English this written in the form of a Dialogue or Morning Meditation on the Death of Sir Thomas More, Knt. and Alderman of London. . . . In Two Parts. . . .*
- 1732 *The Christian Doctrine of the Trinity or, Father, Son and Spirit, three Persons and one God, asserted and proved, with their Divine Rights and Powers illustrated by plain Evidence of Scripture, without the Aid or Assistance of human Schemes, written chiefly for the use of private Christians.*
- 1733 *Death and Burial or, the Last Hour Considered, and Separate Spirits made perfect with an Account of the High Variety of their Employments and Placements; attempted in two Several Discourses, in company of Sir John Burleigh, Baronet, and his Lady, deceased. [Second edition London 1748.]*
1735. *Sermons on Various Subjects, viz. Christian Faith, I. II. III. A Rational Defence of the Gospel. . . .* 1171. *Courage and Reason. With Epistles suitable to every Subject. . . .* Vol. II. . . .
- 1737 *A Several Death Calling Short of Heaven, accomplished in the Conquest of the High Young Man when Jesus Lives.*
- 1738 *Three Dissertations relating to the Christian Doctrine of the Trinity, [viz.] I. The Spirit invited to the Christian Faith. II. God and Man united in the Person of Christ. III. The Sonship of Christ as Believer founded on his Obedience.*
1738. *Legends or the Eight Dec of Heaven in the Kingdom after Death with a Variety of Rules to guard against error in the Affairs of Religion and human Life, as well as in the Sciences. [London 1737. Several editions 1740, London 1745, 1751, 1763, 1812. Boston 1813, 1825. London 1799, 1797, 1801. Edinburgh 1807. Boston [1816 American edition] 1812.]*
- 1739 *Four Dissertations relating to the Christian Doctrine of the Trinity.*
- 1746 *The Knowledge of the Heavens and the Earth made easy or the First Principles of Astronomy and Geography explained by the use of Globes and Maps: . . . [London 1746, 1748, 1756. Several editions London 1760, 1773.]*

- 1785 *A Defense against the Temptation to Self-Murder*. Shows the Criminal Nature and Guilt of it are displayed: The various Reasons for it are confuted and answered; . . . Together with some Reflections on those in strong Delirium, Fainting and other Practices akin to this heinous Sin.
- 1785 *The Religious Improvement of Public Houses*. A Sermon preached at Berry-Street, June 25, 1775. On Occasion of the Death of our late Christian Sovereign George I. and the peaceful Accession of his present Majesty George II. [Second edition London 1777. Third edition 1777.]
- 1786 *Prayers composed for the Use and Edification of Children*, suited to their different Ages and their various Circumstances: Together with Instructions to Youth in the Duty of Prayer, drawn up by way of Question and Answer. And a Devotional Address to them on that Subject.
- 1786 *An Essay towards the Encouragement of Charity-Schools*, particularly those which are supported by Protestant Dissenters, for teaching the Children of the Poor to Read and Write; . . . In which is prefixed, an Address to the Supporters of these Schools.
- 1789 *Discourse on Various Subjects, Devotion and Morals*. With a Sacred Firm united to each Subject. In Three Volumes. Designed for the Use of Christian Families, as well as for the Hours of Secret Retirement.
- 1789 *A Discert against Infidelity* on the Danger of Apostasy from the Christian Faith: with an Answer to various queries concerning the Belief of the Resurrection, and the Hope of the Future State upon their Pretences to Christianity.
- 1789 *The Passions of the Passions Explained and Improved*; or, a brief and comprehensive System of the Natural Affections of Mankind, and an Account of their Names, Nature, Appearances, Effects, and different Uses in Human Life; to which are subjoined Moral and Divine Rules for the Regulation or Government of them. [New York 1773.]
- 1789 *Placeness of the Love of God and the Use and Abuse of the Passions in Religion*, with a Devotional Meditation suited to each Discourse. To which is Prefixed, A Plain and Particular Account of the Natural Passions, with Rules for the Government of them. [London 1760. New York 1770. London 1770. Fifth edition 1770. London 1779. London 1800.]
- 1790 *To His Excellency, Jonathan Boucher, Esq.* in London, appointed by His Majesty King George III to the Government of New England,

and new Retaining Bone. [This poem of forty-one lines was published in Boston, probably by Salter. It does not appear in the collected works.]

- 1730 *Catechisms; or, Instructions in the Principles of the Christian Religion, and the History of Scripture, composed for Children and Youth, according to their different Ages. To which is prefixed, a Discourse on the Way of Instruction by Catechisms, and the best Manner of Catechizing them.* [London 1730. Seventh edition 1739. Twenty-second edition London 1791. Cambridge 1811. Glasgow 1804, 1805.]
- 1731 *An Essay Attempt towards the Revival of Practical Religion among Christians, and particularly the Protestant Dissenters, by a Sermon Addressed to Ministers and People, in some occasional Occasions.*
- 1734 *The Strength and Weakness of Human Reason - or, the Important question about the Sufficiency of Reason to Conduct Man to Religion and Future Happiness, argued between an Inspiring Devil and a Christian Divine; and the Debate Continued and Determined to the Satisfaction of both, by an Impartial Mediator.*
- 1736 *The Wonderful Christian Progress for Early Death. A Sermon on occasion of the Death of Mrs. Anne Stacy, . . . Preached . . . April 2, 1736. [Second edition London 1737.]*
- 1738 *A Short View of the Whole Scripture History, with a Continuation of the Jewish Affairs, from the Old Testament, till the Time of Christ, and an Account of the Chief Prophecies that relate to him represented in a way of Question and Answer. Illustrated with various Remarks on the History, and the Religion of the Jews, and Christians; and on the Laws, Government, Rites, Customs, and Writings of the Jews; and adorned with Figures relating to their Camp, Tabernacle, and Worship.* [London 1738. London 1811. Second edition London 1791. Fourth edition 1793. Sixth edition 1795. Eighth edition 1797. Fourteenth edition 1851. Sixteenth edition London 1798, 1799, 1800. Twenty-first edition 1811. Twenty-fifth edition 1814, 1815, 1816. Oxford 1817. London 1818, 1820, 1821, 1840.]
- 1739 *An Essay towards the Proof of a Separate State of Souls between Death and the Resurrection, and the Commencement of the Records of Future and Time immediately after Death.*
- 1740 *An Essay on the Freedom of Will in God and in Creatures, and on Various Subjects connected therewith viz. the Plans of Liberty and Necessity; the Causes of the Determination of the Will; the Use of the Understanding to direct, not to determine it; the Liberty of God as a Creator, a Governor, and a Benefactor; the*

Doctrine of Faithfuly; the Spring of Moral Good and Evil; the Difference between Moral and Positive Laws; the Rise and Fall of Man, and the Free Grace of God; the Necessity of Faith in the Gospel, and the criminal Nature of Infidelity.

- 1773 *Philosophical Essays on various Subjects, viz. Space, Substance, Body, Spirit, the Operations of the Soul in Union with the Body, Inside Ideas, Perceptual Consciousness, Plans and Writings of Spirits, the Departing Soul, the Resurrection of the Body, the Production and Operation of Plants and Animals, with some Remarks on Mr. Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding, to which is interspersed a Brief History of Ontology, or the Science of Being in General, with its Affections.* [London 1773. Edinburgh 1803.]
- 1774 *Religious Journalist: Miscellaneous Thoughts in Prose and Verse on Natural, Moral, and Divine Subjects written chiefly in Young's Years.* [London 1774. Boston 1794. London 1797, 1798. Fifth edition 1798. Leves 1803, 1805.]
- 1775 *Faith and Reason Represented in fifty-five Sermons on the Principal Heads of the Christian Religion; Preached at St. Mary's, 1775. By J. Davis, D. D., D. Div., B.A., J. Oakes, D. D., R. Hylton, B. Jennings, J. Roberts. Published for the use of Families, especially on the Lord's Day Evenings. (The work appeared in two volumes; Volume one Sermons I, vii, viii, xix, and xxi to Vol. I and xxi, xxvii, xlii, and xliii to Vol. II.)*
- 1776 *The Sinner and the Sanctifier. or, the Sacrifice of Christ and the Operations of the Spirit Vindicated with a free Debate about the Experience of those Vertices, represented in a friendly Conversation between Persons of different Sentiments.*
- 1777 *Faithful Represented in the Character of St. Paul, the chief Springs of his Speech, and its various Advantages Stagnantly together with some occasional Views of the contrary Part.*
- 1778 *The Religion of Time, Place, and People under the Jewish and Christian Dispensations considered and compared, in several Discourses, viz. I. On the Perpetuity of a Nation, and the Observance of the Lord's Day. II. The Administration of the Lord's Supper, at home or abroad. III. The Religion and Conversation of places of Worship, considered in a sermon at the opening of a new meeting place. Pages of Versity, and holy Things were usually presented in the Old Testament than in the New. V. The Difference between the Visible and the Invisible Church, the Jewish and the Christian, and the Religion of each of them.*

- 1730 *The World to Come* or, *Discourses on the joys or sorrows of*
Departed Souls at Death, and the Glory or Torment of the Resur-
rection. Wherein is proved, An Soul travels the Period of
 a separate State of Souls after Death. [London 1740, 1746,
 1813. Newmarket 1814.]
- 1738 *A New Essay on Civil Power in Things Sacred* or, an Inquiry
 after an Established Religion, consistent with the just Liber-
 ties of Natural and political under every Form of Civil
 Government.
- 1739 *Self-love and Virtue Reconciled only by Religion* or, an Essay
 to prove that the only Effectual Obligation of Natural to prac-
 tise Virtue depends on the Beliefs and Will of God together
 with an occasional Proof of the Necessity of Revelation.
- 1740 *The Fall and Recovery of Man* or, an attempt to vindicate
 the Scriptural Account of those great Events upon the plain
 Principles of Reason. With an answer to various Difficulties
 relating to Original Sin, the Universal Separation of Nature,
 and the ever-spreading Curse of Death; general offers of Grace
 to all Men, and the certain Salvation of some; the Case of the
 Non-Resistants, and the State of the dying Infants. Wherein are
 subjoined Three short Essays, viz. The Proof of Man's Fall by
 his Misery; The Supplication of His and Righteousness; and, The
 Faith and Perfection of Him.
- 1740 *Questions Proper for Students in Divinity, Candidates of the*
Ministry, and Young Christians.
- 1741 *The Improvement of the Mind* or, a Supplement to the Art of
 Logic containing a Variety of Remarks and Rules for the Ac-
 quaintance and Communication of useful Knowledge in Religion, in
 the Sciences, and in Common Life. [London 1741. Boston 1779.
 Pittsburgh 1800. London 1804. Boston 1810. Washington 1811.
 Pittsburgh 1814. New York 1815. Boston 1821.
 Boston 1822, 1826, 1830. Baltimore 1831. Boston 1831, 1833.
 New York 1840, New York 1855. Second edition (London 1741, 1750
 1769, 1817, 1819. Boston 1804. Pittsburgh 1804, 1844. Cal-
 cutha 1855.)]
- 1742 *The History of all the Religions which had ever Prevalent*
containing a brief Survey of the several publick Representations
of God towards Man, or his appointment of different Forms of
Religion in successive Ages. Briefly proposed as an easy View
to lead us through many Difficulties of the Old Testament, and
the New; and particularly to explain and reconcile the several
Books of St. Paul's Epistles on those Subjects to every Capacity.

- 1745 The World to Come. [Vol. II.] [Second edition London 1745. Boston 1746. Leeds 1809. Portsea 1809. Basing 1813. London 1813. Basing 1814.]
- 1746 Orthodoxy and Charity United in several Reasoning Essays on the Law and Gospel, Faith and Works viz. Essay I. The Substance or matter of the Gospel. II. The Power of the Gospel. III. The use of the Law under the Gospel. IV. Mankind says of coming to God without Christ. V. A Faith and Way towards of having Faith, or coming to God by Jesus Christ. VI. A reasoning Thought on various controversies about Faith and Salvation. VII. Against uncharitableness. VIII. The Self-Flattery in Scripture, and the various opinions of Christians. IX. An Apology for Christians of different Sects. [Boston 1746.]
- 1746 A Faithful Inquiry after the Ancient and Original Doctrines of the Trinity taught by Christ and his Apostles. [London 1746.]
- 1746 Gospel and Important Questions concerning Jesus the Son of God freely proposed with a humble attempt to answer them according to Scripture . . . To which is added, a Charitable Essay on the True Importance of any Human Scheme to explain the Sacred Doctrines of the Trinity. [Boston 1746. London 1746.]
- 1746 The Glory of Christ as God-man Displayed, in Three Discourses viz. Disc. I. A Survey of the Visible Appearances of Christ, as God before his Incarnation, with some Observations on the words of the Old Testament applied to Christ. Disc. II. An Inquiry into the Intrinsic Powers of the Human Nature of Christ in the present Clarified State, with several Propositions proved. Disc. III. An Argument tending not the early Existence of the Human Soul of Christ, even before the Creation of the world. With an Appendix explaining an Abridgement of Doctor Thomas Goodwin's Discourse of the "Divine and Humane Nature of Christ," in his Essay in Faith, Vol. II. Book 3. [Boston 1746.]
- 1747 Evangelical Discourses on several Subjects. To which is added, an Essay on the Powers and Contents of Flesh and Spirit.
- 1747 Evangelical Discourses on several Subjects. To which is added, an Essay on the Powers and Contents of Flesh and Spirit.
- 1747 The National Foundation of a Christian Church, and the Form of Christian Communion. To which are added three Discourses, viz. Discourse I. A Pattern for a Blessing Preacher. Discourse II. The Office of Ministers. Discourse III. [Writing: Close to Church-Fellowship. [Boston 1747.]

Posthumous Publications

- 1711 The Improvement of the Mind. The Second Part. [Published in 1712 by R. Jennings and F. Hookridge, the literary executors of Watts's estate.]
- 1713 The Works of the late Reverend and Learned Isaac Watts, D.D. Published by Messrs. and now Collected into Six Volumes. In which are also inserted the Second Part of the Improvement of the Mind, An Essay on Musician, and some Additions to his Miscellaneous Thoughts in Verse and Prose. Now first published from his Manuscripts, and, by the Direction of Mrs. Hill, Revised and Corrected by R. Jennings, D. D. and the late F. Hookridge, D.D.
- 1719 The Posthumous Works of the late Learned and Reverend Isaac Watts, D. D. In Two Volumes. Compiled from Papers in Possession of his immediate Successors. Adjusted and Published by a Committee of the University of Cambridge.
- 1812 His Sermons Preached (in the years 1740-49, by the late Isaac Watts, D. D. Now first Published from MSS. in the Possession of a Contemporary Friend. Second, 1812, John Eys Smith [ed.]. [New York 1813.]

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

The writer was born in Glasgow, Kentucky, October 4, 1894. After completing grammar school and one year of high school, the family moved to Portland, Oregon. He was graduated from Washington High School in 1913. In June 1915 he received the A. B. degree from Willamette University. His theological studies were completed by work at the following institutions: Danell, Peabody, Garrett, Astory, and Doran. He received the B.D. degree from Astory Theological Seminary. The work on the doctorate at the University of Florida was begun in September 1924 and was completed in June 1925.

In December 28, 1940 he married Catherine E. Hoover.

For the past sixteen years he has been the pastor of the Central Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Florida.

This dissertation was prepared under the direction of the candidate's supervisory committee and has been submitted to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and to the Graduate Council, and was approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

June 6, 1959

John H. H. H.
Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

John H. H. H.
Dean, Graduate School

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